VIRGINIA WILDLIFE

JANUARY 1997 ONE DOLLAR

Director's Column

William L. Woodfin, Jr

Trout Program Provides Great Recreation

The trout program at the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has traditionally provided great recreational opportunities for resident and out-of-state anglers, and now our diverse program is offering a wider range of trout fishing opportunities than ever before.

Two years ago we initiated a year-round season for trout fishing in Virginia. The change from having a trout season with designated dates for closing and opening has proven to be popular with our constituents because of the increased fishing days. A year-round season is also good for our hatcheries. With a steady demand for trout, our facilities operate more effectively than ever.

In the catchable-trout program we have made some changes that have been widely regarded as user friendly. Just a few years ago our stocking season was limited to March, April, and May, but now the program extends from October to May, a five month increase beyond the previous stocking season.

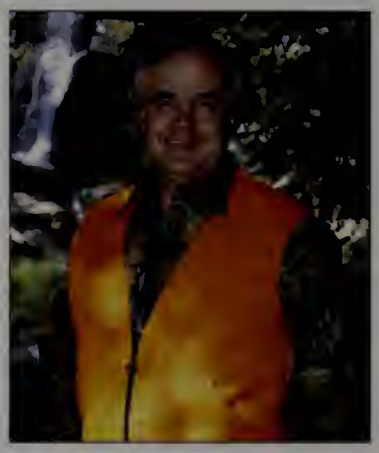
Our delayed-harvest program started in 1989 and now includes six streams, one of which is Accotink Creek in Fairfax County. This winter we will be stocking catchable size trout, right in the shadow of our nation's capitol. Our friends in Northern Virginia now have their own trout stream. Anglers should remember that only artificial lures are allowed on delayed harvest streams until June 1, when bait use and creeling become legal.

Special regulation trout waters have increased since 1975 from seven to 33. This has truly been an "added value" development in our trout program as it has increased recreational opportunities for those with specific angling interests. In addition to enhanced special regulation angling opportunities, our trophy trout streams have expanded from one in 1981 to a total of eight.

In other important developments, we have expanded the fingerling program and we now support three trophy trout reservoirs and five small trout lakes. The fingerling program stocks trout smaller than legal creel size in waters that will support trout year round, but do not have trout populations now. Our urban trout program, which is aimed at providing close-at-hand angling opportunities for city dwellers, was begun in 1993 and now totals six lakes.

We are also proud of our trout stream inventory and monitoring program for wild trout streams, which is one of the most comprehensive and useful programs in the country. Virginia has more native brook trout waters than all other Southeastern states combined, and we want to be the best stewards we can. Trout enthusiasts can now display a brookie, our state fish, on their vehicles with our new brook trout license plate available from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles.

And, last but not least, our angler surveys reveal a growing satisfaction with our diversified

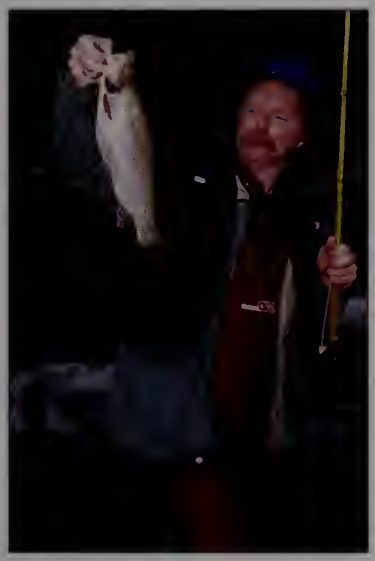


trout programs. You will see some of the results from our successful programs as you read this special trout issue of *Virginia Wildlife*.

When you get the urge to go fishing, you can get the most up-to-date information on trout stocking schedules by calling 804-525-FISH. For more information about fishing in Virginia you can obtain a *1997 Virginia Freshwater Fishing Guide* from a license agent or at one of our offices. You can also learn about fishing opportunities in *A Guide to Virginia's Wildlife Management Areas*, which you can order for $5 shipping and handling from V.I.B., P.O. Box 27563, Richmond, Virginia, 2326. The guide is also available at our regional offices and at our main office in Richmond for no charge.

For those who would like to hunt in January, you can read about our special late goose season in this issue as well. It's open from January 15 to February 8, west of I-95, and we hope you will check it out.

VIRGINIA WILDLIFE



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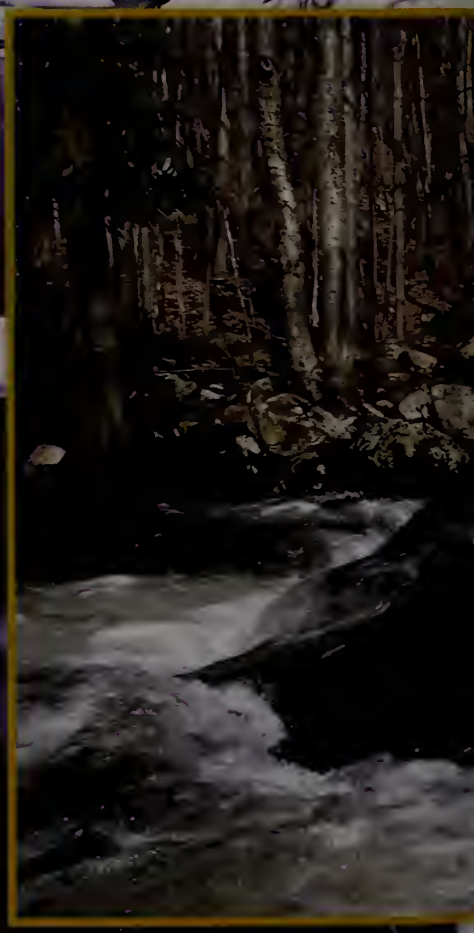
VOLUME 58 NUMBER 1

Winter Trout:

Recreation for the Hardy



It may be the middle of winter, but trout fishing in January and February may be just the outdoor tonic you need.

by Bob Gooch

Virginia has had winter trout fishing for years in the big two-story bodies of water such as Lake Moomaw, South Holston Lake, and the Flannagan and Philpott reservoirs. However, winter fishing *is* new to put-and-take trout fishing in designated waters, particularly streams.

The trout is a cold water fish and thrives at much lower temperatures than some other popular game species such as largemouth bass. The bass is happiest in water temperatures of 65 to 70 degrees, but the rainbow trout prefers a chilly 54 degrees. The brook trout likes it a few degrees warmer at 58, and the brown is the most tolerant of the three, accepting temperature ranges of 55 to 65 degrees. Over the years, I've taken many smallmouth bass while fishing brown trout streams.

Trout are well adapted to winter water temperatures, but when water temperatures get too low, they can become sluggish and more difficult to catch, even though in some put-and-take streams the fish fare much better through the cold winter months than they do during the summer.

With Virginia's year-round trout season, anglers can take advantage of streams that are often in great condition during the winter months. Photos ©Dwight Dyke

Virginia trout fishing has been boosted by the year-round season, primarily because of the use of put-and-take streams in February and March. The mid-winter days of February and early March can be a joy on a Virginia trout stream, even though Virginia winter weather can be highly unpredictable, ranging from summerlike winter days to raging blizzards with the temperatures hovering well below freezing. In extremely cold weather few anglers will care to venture out. But I've had ice form on the guides of my fishing rod even during unseasonably cold April weather. Regardless of the seasons, we have to take the weather as it comes.

One overlooked advantage of the continuous season is the improved trout management and more abundant trout populations. More good trout can be raised because the hatcheries can clear the tanks more quickly and turn to producing more healthy trout for Virginia waters.

Planning for winter trout fishing begins with clothing. By all means dress warmly—but in layers so you can strip down as the day warms up. However, it might become colder, or a blizzard might blow in. Heavier clothing kept in your car might save the day. And always have that rain gear nearby. It could be a life saver. Make sure the rain jacket has a hood you can pull over your head. The combination of being cold and wet is unpleasant at the minimum—and possibly dangerous.

The hands and feet suffer the most from the cold on a winter trout fishing trip. Insulated boots or waders are a must, preferably waders. They provide more protection while fishing. Hip boots are fine until you mistakenly step into water too deep for them and the icy water pours over the tops. Then you could be in real trouble. The best thing to do is go ashore, pour the water out of your boots, and change to dry clothes. If you don't have a change of clothing, the safest thing to do is head home and plan a trip for another day. Also let the wetting be a hard-earned lesson in winter trout fishing.

The insulation in boots or waders usually protects the feet only. Pressing against your legs, the icy water will eventually chill you. Long johns and heavy, possibly even woolen trousers, are the answer to this discomfort. For complete protection to the feet I like to first pull on a pair of thin silk or nylon socks to help absorb sweat. Over these I like to wear a pair of woolen socks.

You might have more trouble keeping your hands warm, particularly the tips of your fingers. The typical angler's glove with the fingers exposed do wonders for most winter fishing. They don't seal off those sensitive finger tips so necessary in handling routine angling duties such as changing lures, breaking off and retying damaged line, and removing stubborn hooks from the mouth of a fish. If the weather is extremely cold, however, I may forgo my angling gloves in favor of my "feel" hunting gloves. They protect the fingers with thin cloth that also allows for greater dexterity than heavier gloves.

The choices of tackle for winter fishing are many. While I enjoy taking trout on one of my light fly rods, I lean heavily toward light spinning tackle, particularly on very cold days when ice is likely to form on the guides of my rod. A thin, 4-pound test monofilament line is more likely to slide through the ice-clogged guides of the rod than the larger fly line. Ice will eventually begin to form on the fly line itself. On the other hand, on a warm February or March day you might even find the stocked trout feeding on the surface. Either way, if the weather is cold enough, you are going to get wet gloves from handling a wet fly line or from a dripping spinning reel. A couple of extra pairs of gloves can be a real asset under such conditions.

The streams are usually in excellent shape during the winter months. They are flowing full and strong, and you might find your favorite quiet pool loaded with currents. That means a different angling approach. The winter waters are usually clear, though rain and melting snow can occasionally color the water. And expect ice along the edges and some ice in the rapids. Virginia's fast trout streams rarely, if ever, freeze over completely. The rapids and riffles will usually be open, but you might find the major pools frozen solid. If there has been a long stretch of sub-freezing weather, it might be best to call someone before you go and ask about the condition of the stream you plan to fish.

This makes it sound like winter trout fishing will only be done under the most extreme conditions. But anyone who has lived in Virginia very long knows that we can have some very mild winters. During such winter weather trout fishing in February or March can be little different than fishing in late March and early April.

Fishing methods that take trout in April and May will also take them during the colder months, but some refinements that respect the colder water and weather might be helpful. Just remember that when the water temperatures drop below the trout's preferred level it tends to slow down a bit and it feeds less and less aggressively. A temperature gauge is a handy winter trout fishing tool.

The winter trout also tends to rest in deeper water and is not inclined to move far for its food. The angler may find he has to all but put his lure in the trout's mouth. He should also fish deeper, almost on the bottom—

and very slowly. Don't expect those slashing strikes from fast and hungry trout that you enjoy so much in April.

Some have found that small plastic grubs work with a spinning set up. Fish them on or near the bottom and work them slowly. And cover the water thoroughly. A winter trout is not likely to dash across a pool to grab something to eat as it might do in May or early June. Don't make it work for its meal. The spinning angler might also try the various prepared baits, such as salmon eggs and the scented power baits. Color might not make much difference, but I suspect white that closely resembles the food pellets the fish are fed on in the hatcheries might have an edge—particularly for freshly released fish. Some of those winter trout have been in the stream for a long time, many holdovers from the fall stockings. In the better streams where trout have the chance to survive the hot summers, you might find yourself fishing for trout that were stocked a year or more ago. They have adapted to life in the wild and are little different from native fish.

The fly fisherman should try working nymphs slowly and almost on the bottom. Polaroid sunglasses are handy for helping read the water. They will bring out boulders and other underwater cover the fish might be lurking near or under. Give such cover thorough coverage. If fly fishing I also keep handy a small selection of dry flies. Sometimes even in the dead of winter some stream bottom insect emerges and floats the surface. Trout will come up for those insects. You just might be treated to some exciting dry fly fishing on a warm day in February.

Regardless of whether fly fishing or spinning is your choice, the best bait for winter trout could be the natural baits. Good natural baits are often hard to find during the winter months, but you might be able to find some small minnows in tiny streams or the shoals of lakes. Regular earthworms, "garden hackle," are always a good choice, but they too are hard to find when the earth is frozen hard.

Work the natural baits slowly just as you would artificial lures. The natural odors from the real thing might give you an edge, but cover the water slowly and thoroughly.

I find that because of the slower pace I spend more time drifting my baits or lures than I do casting.

That's a lot of what winter trout fishing is all about. Instead of the budding willows, greening pastures, and brighter sunshine of the old traditional opening days the scene that greets you is stark. The hardwoods are bare and the dead leaves of the sycamores rattle in the wind. The prevailing colors are shades of brown and grays, and during the shorter days of winter the sun lacks some of its springtime luster.

But that's a good trout stream before your eyes and there are trout lurking in its shadows. Slide into it and enjoy some trout fishing before a winter storm blows in and drives you back inside to warmth and security. ☐

Bob Gooch is an outdoor columnist and has authored many books on hunting and fishing. He lives in Troy, near Charlottesville.

1997 Trout G

by Larry Mohn
VDGIF Fisheries Regional Manager

Introduction

Virginia contains over 2800 miles of trout streams in addition to numerous ponds, small lakes and reservoirs. The total includes over 2300 miles of wild trout streams and about 600 miles of water inhabited with stocked trout. Virginia's diversified trout habitat offers a wide range of trout fishing opportunities.

Virginia's warm climate and topography generally limit trout habitat to the western portion of the state. The Blue Ridge and Allegheny Mountains provide the elevation to maintain low water temperatures year-round, while the valley between these ranges contains the unique limestone formations necessary to produce highly productive spring creeks.

Trout management in Virginia consists of three basic programs. The *catchable stocking program* is the best known and most popular. Such waters are stocked from October through May with catchable-sized trout. See the following *Trout Stocking Plan* on pages 12-13 for the streams and lakes stocked and their stocking schedule.

The *wild trout program* includes the management of reproducing populations of brook, rainbow, and

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Dwight Dyke

brown trout. Efforts are directed primarily at habitat preservation and proper regulation for protection of spawning stocks.

The *fingerling stocking program* involves sublegal trout stockings. This relatively small program is rapidly growing in size and popularity due to the high quality trout fishing provided.

Restrictions have been applied to certain wild trout waters as well as several types of stocked trout streams to provide anglers with the opportunity to catch more and larger trout throughout the fishing season. These special regulation areas include some of the state's best trout waters and are described in detail in this guide.

The trout season is open year-round in Virginia. Fishing success for both wild and stocked trout should be very high through the spring, fall and mild winter periods. From June through September, normally low stream flows and warming water temperatures makes trout fishing more difficult. However, experienced trout anglers can find good trout fishing opportunities throughout the year.

All stocked, special regulation, and larger wild trout waters are featured on the five maps beginning on page 25 in this special issue.

New For 1997

After extensive restructuring of the trout stocking program last year, the Department has made few changes for 1997. Several new delayed harvest special regulation waters have been added. These include Accotink Creek in Northern Virginia's highly urbanized Fairfax County, Passage Creek in Shenandoah County, and Pound River in Wise County. A detailed description of these three new waters can be found in the Delayed Harvest Section. Regulations have also been changed on the special regulation section of the Jackson River in Bath County. The minimum size limit has been increased from 12 inches to 16 inches and the creel limit reduced from six to two trout per day.

There have also been some regulation changes made at the three fee-fishing areas. The opening day for the fee season has been moved up to the first Saturday in April at all three areas with fishing closed for five consecutive days prior to the opening. The fee season has been extended in the fall to September 30 at Clinch Mountain and Crooked Creek and to October 31 at Douthat State Park. Also, the Douthat regulation has been modified to allow children 12 years of age or younger to fish without permit as long as they are accompanied by a permitted adult and their combined creel does not exceed that of the adult.

Finally, there has been some minor changes to the stocking plan concerning frequency of stockings and stockings periods. Most notable is that the biweekly stream category has been eliminated. All biweekly streams are now Category A and all Category A streams will be stocked more frequently in the spring. Refer to the stocking plan on pages 12-13 for new stocking periods.

Catchable Trout Stocking Program

As in most states, put-n-take trout fishing draws the most interest and attention in Virginia, probably because of the availability of catchable-sized trout and ease of capture. Virginia's catchable program is supported by hatcheries located at Marion, Paint Bank, and Wytheville. Three rearing facilities are located at Marion, Williamsville, and Montebello.

Trout eggs are collected from large brood stock in early fall at the hatcheries, and placed in hatching jars which maintain an even flow of well-oxygenated water through the eggs. Jars must be constantly cleaned and dead eggs removed to control disease. After 25 to 30 days the trout begin to hatch. The small "fry," as they are called, remain attached to their egg sacs for about 14 days, and draw their food from it. The fry are kept indoors in small troughs until their sacs are absorbed and they begin taking small pelleted food. When they reach a suitable fingerling stage (2-3 inches) they are transported to rearing facilities where they are placed in raceways.

The fish are fed several times daily for at least a year until they

reach catchable size (9-11 inches). During this rearing period, it is necessary to clean raceways daily to control disease and occasionally grade fish to ensure that the larger trout will not eat smaller ones.

The program is covered primarily from the sale of trout licenses. In addition to a valid state fishing license, a trout license is required to fish legally in designated stocked trout waters Annual output from the program is approximately 1,250,000 catchable trout in addition to variable numbers of fingerling and subcatchable trout used in other programs.

The 1997 trout fishing season will be the second without an opening day. All streams on the stocking list have already received at least one stocking and will continue to be stocked into May. Stockings will be discontinued after late May or early June and will resume after October 1. Streams and lakes will be stocked at various intervals depending on their potential to hold early trout during the late spring and early fall. Fishermen should find that most streams have good numbers of trout throughout the stocking season.

Waters to be stocked are listed by county in the following *Trout Stocking Plan*. The plan indicates the frequency of stocking and the specific stocking periods for each stream. Call your local VDGIF office for more information or 1-804-525-FISH for daily trout stocking updates during stocking season.

Stocked trout streams are marked with appropriate signs which identify the portion of stream stocked. Marked sections are open to public fishing in accordance with agreements between the Department and private landowners. This is the only case where anglers are not required to have landowner permission before fishing on private water.

Urban Fishing

The Department's Urban Fishing Program was launched in December 1993. This program is designed to provide high-quality fishing opportunities for anglers in urban and suburban areas. Currently, the program includes the stocking of six lakes: Cook Lake (Cameron Run Regional Park) in Alexandria, Locust Shade Pond in Prince William County, Dorey Park Lake in Henrico County, Shields Lake (Byrd Park) in Richmond, Lake Biggins (Huntington Park) in Newport News, and Northwest River Park in Chesapeake. Catchable trout are stocked at all sites from November through April, and channel catfish are stocked during warm weather months at Locust Shade, Dorey, and Byrd. This program is co-sponsored by the recreation department in each locality.

Special Regulations

Fee Fishing Areas

The fee fishing areas offer put-n-take trout fishing with the added advantage that trout are stocked several times weekly throughout the season. The fee fishing program operates from the first Saturday in April through September at Clinch Mountain and Crooked Creek and through October at Douthat. During the fee fishing season, a daily permit is required in addition to a valid Virginia fishing license. After the fee fishing season, these areas revert to designated stocked trout waters and a trout stamp is required instead of the daily permit. The creel limit at these areas is six fish per day.

Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area:

The Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area is located in southwest Virginia, about 7 miles west of Saltville. The area consists of the 330-acre Laurel Bed Lake and approximately seven miles of Big Tumbling Creek and its two major tributaries, Briar Cove Creek and Laurel Bed Creek. Big Tumbling Creek is a large, steep gradient stream with numerous small waterfalls and large, deep rocky pools. The two tributaries are much smaller with a more moderate gradient. The lake provides a good trout fishery and is used to regulate summer flow in the streams. Trout are stocked daily (except Sunday) throughout the fee period in the streams, and fishing must cease at 7 p.m. to allow for restocking. Camping is available at the area and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries owns and manages the surrounding land.

Crooked Creek Fee Fishing Area

Crooked Creek is located in Carroll County, five miles east of Galax. The area consists of five miles of stream which is stocked. In addition, approximately two miles of stream are managed as a wild trout fishery. Crooked Creek is a wide, fairly low gradient stream with a gravel bottom. Surrounding land is mixed fields and woodlots not characteristic of the more common mountain stream drainages. As at the Clinch Mountain Area, fishing must cease at 7 p.m. to allow for restocking. No facilities are available at Crooked Creek for camping, but private facilities are available nearby.

Douthat Lake Fee Fishing Area

The Douthat Fee Fishing Area was expanded several years ago to include about four miles of Wilson Creek along with the stocking of 60-acre Douthat Lake. This fee-fishing area has two features designed to encourage children participation. A small children-only area has been established on Wilson Creek just below the dam and, beginning this year, children 12 years of age or under can fish without a permit throughout the fee-fishing area as long as they are accompanied by a permitted adult and their combined creel does not exceed that of the adult. The lake provides fishing for bass, bluegill, pickerel, and catfish in addition to trout which are stocked twice weekly. The lake, stream and surrounding land are located within Douthat State Park and are adminis-

tered by the Virginia Division of Parks. Available recreation includes camping, hiking and swimming in addition to fishing. Cabins are also available for rent if application is made well in advance. The park is located in a beautiful mountain setting with most of the surrounding land within the George Washington National Forest.

Delayed Harvest Trout Streams

In 1989, the Department initiated this management program with establishment of Virginia's first "delayed harvest" trout fishery. This program incorporates aspects of both catch-and-release and put-n-take trout fishing. Catchable-sized trout are stocked in the fall, winter and spring. From October 1 through the following May 31, only single hook artificial lures may be used and all fish must be returned unharmed. From June 1 through September 30, general trout regulations are in effect and trout may be creeled. The program has been expanded from three streams to six streams for 1997.

Accotink Creek (Fairfax County)

The delayed harvest section of Accotink Creek extends from Route 236 (Little River Turnpike) downstream 1.9 miles to Route 620 (Braddock Road). This stream section is bounded by a Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) floodplain park that belies the stream's urban setting (the upper boundary is adjacent to the Capital Beltway). The stream contains numerous riffle-run-pool sequences with good holding pools and has an abundance of large woody debris. Primary access is via the FCPA Wakefield Park facility off Braddock Road.

Back Creek (Bath County)

The rugged mountains that form the backdrop to the Back Creek special regulation area is one of the area's most appealing features. The stream is about 25 feet in width with moderate gradient and excellent fly-fishing opportunities. The stream has been extensively reconstructed to improve trout habitat by Virginia Power who constructed a pump storage facility just upstream. The land adjacent to this stream section is managed for recreation by Virginia Power. In addition to trout fishing, the area offers a campground, picnic pavilion, outdoor games, and two warmwater lakes for fishing and swimming. Take Route 39 west from Warm Springs to Mountain Grove then right on Route 600 for six miles.

North Fork of Pound River and Pound River (Wise County)

The delayed harvest section begins at the base of the North Fork of Pound Dam and extends downstream about 2 miles to the confluence of Indian Creek. The upper part of this section, on the North Fork of the Pound River, is a medium-sized stream with shallow runs and riffles flowing through fields and woodlots. Downstream of Route 23 the river passes through the town of Pound, gaining size and flow, and taking on a more urban setting. Access is available at the North Fork of Pound Dam, and at parking lots within the town of Pound. This stream should provide high catch rates and good fishing opportunities from October through early summer.

North River (Augusta County)

The delayed harvest section of the North River extends from the base of Elkhorn Dam downstream 1.5 miles to the head of the Staunton City Reservoir. This is a remote section of stream that can only be reached by foot trail. Access is available by parking at Elkhorn Lake and following the trail along the lake to the spillway. This area provides a remote, scenic fishing opportunity during the winter and spring months. Stream flow in the North River is usually low during summer and fall.

Passage Creek (Warren County)

The new delayed harvest section of Passage Creek extends from the Warren County line downstream approximately one mile through the Department's Front Royal Fish Hatchery. This section of stream is immediately downstream from the area that has historically been stocked under the put-n-take program. Parking is available on Forest Service lands adjacent to Route 678 or at the hatchery during open hours.

South River (Augusta County)

The delayed harvest section extends from the Second Street bridge in Waynesboro upstream 2.4 miles to the base of Rife Loth Dam. This stream section runs through the city of Waynesboro and is in an urban setting. South River is a relatively large, wide stream with shallow runs and riffles. The stream provides outstanding fly-fishing opportunities because of its size and its abundance of aquatic insects. The stream is open to fishing year-round and provides excellent winter fishing.

Catchable Trout Stocking Plan

Several new waters have been added to the 1997 Trout Stocking Plan. These include two new urban fishing lakes: Cook Lake in Alexandria and Biggins Lake in Newport News; and three new delayed harvest streams: Accotink Creek in Fairfax County, Pound River and North Fork Pound River in Wise County and Passage Creek in Warren County. Only one stream section has been dropped from the list. The South Fork of the Moormans River will no longer receive stocked trout due to the loss of access as a result of recent floods. In addition, a few bodies of water in Rockingham County are still not accessible due to the flooding from Hurricane Fran at the time of this writing. These waters will be stocked as access is re-established.

	Category of Water	
ALBEMARLE COUNTY		
Moormans River (N. Forks)	B	(NSF)
Sugar Hollow Reservoir	A	
ALEXANDRIA CITY		
Cook Lake	U	
ALLEGHANY COUNTY		
Clifton Forge Reservoir*	A	
Smith Creek*	C	(NSF)
Pounding Mill Creek*	B	(NSF)
Jerrys Run*	C	
AMHERST COUNTY		
Davis Mill Creek*	C	
Little Irish Creek*	C	(NSF)
Pedlar River (Upper)*	B	
Pedlar River (Lower)*	A	
Piney River (S. Fk. & Proper)*	B	(NSF)
AUGUSTA COUNTY		
North River (Natural Chimneys)	B	
North River (Gorge)*	B	
North River (Upper)*	B	(NSF)
Mills Creek*	C	
Braley Pond*	A	
Back Creek*	B	
Upper Sherando Lake*	A	
Lower Sherando Lake*	A	
Hearthstone Lake*	A	
Falls Hollow*	C	(NSF)
North River (Tail)*	DH	
South River	DH	
Elkhorn Lake*	A	
BATH COUNTY		
Back Creek	DH	
Back Creek*	B	
Pads Creek*	C	
Jackson River (Hidden Valley)*	A	
Jackson River (Rt. 623)*	A	
Bullpasture River	A	
Spring Run	A	
Douthat Lake	+	
Jackson River Special Reg.*		
BEDFORD COUNTY		
Hunting Creek*	B	(NSF)
Liberty Lake	B	
BLAND COUNTY		
Lick Creek	B	
Laurel Fork Creek	C	
Wolf Creek	A	
BOTETOURT COUNTY		
Jennings Creek*	B	
North Creek*	B	
Middle Creek*	C	
McFalls Creek*	C	
Roaring Run*	B	

	Category of Water	
BUCHANAN COUNTY		
Dismal River	B	
Russell Fork River	C	
CARROLL COUNTY		
Crooked Creek	A	**
Laurel Fork	A	
Little Reed Island Creek	A	
Lovills Creek	C	
Stewarts Creek	B	(NSF)
CHESAPEAKE CITY		
Northwest River Park	U	
CRAIG COUNTY		
Barbours Creek*	B	(NSF)
North Fork Barbours Creek*	C	(NSF)
Potts Creek*	A	
DICKENSON COUNTY		
Frying Pan Creek	C	
Russell Fork River (Haysi)	B	
Pound River	A	
Russell Fork River (Bartlick)	A	
Cranesnest River	B	
FAIRFAX COUNTY		
Accotink Creek	DH	
FAUQUIER COUNTY		
Thompson WMA Pond	B	
FLOYD COUNTY		
Mira Fork	B	(NSF)
Burkes Fork	A	
Goose Creek	C	
Howell Creek	B	(NSF)
Little Indian Creek	B	(NSF)
Little River	A	
Laurel Fork	B	
West Fork Little River	B	(NSF)
Rush Fork	C	(NSF)
FRANKLIN COUNTY		
Maggadee Creek	B	
Runnett Bag Creek	B	
FREDERICK COUNTY		
Winchester Lake	A	
Hogue Creek	B	
Paddy Run*	B	
Clearbrook Lake	A	
GILES COUNTY		
Big Stoney Creek*	A	
Dismal Creek*	B	(NSF)
GRAYSON COUNTY		
Big Wilson Creek	B	
Middle Fox Creek	B	
Fox Creek*	B	
Elk Creek	A	
Helton Creek	C	

Hales Lake*
GREENE COUNTY
Lynch River
South River
HENRICO COUNTY
Dorey Park Lake
HENRY COUNTY
Smith River (Dam)
Smith River (Lower)
HIGHLAND COUNTY
Bullpasture River
S. Br. Potomac River
LEE COUNTY
Martins Creek
North Fork Powell River
MADISON COUNTY
Hughes River
Robinson River
Rose River
MONTGOMERY COUNT
Craigs Creek*
Poverty Creek*
South Fork Roanoke River
Toms Creek
NELSON COUNTY
Tye River
South Rockfish River
NEWPORT NEWS CITY
Biggins Lake
PAGE COUNTY
Cub Run*
Upper Passage Creek*
Hawksbill Creek
PATRICK COUNTY
Ararat River
Clarks Creek
Dan River (Above Talbot)
Dan River (Below Powerho
South Mayo River (North F
South Mayo River
Rockcastle Creek
Round Meadow Creek
Poorhouse Creek
PRINCE WILLIAM COUN
Locust Shade Park
Quantico MCB
PULASKI COUNTY
Peak Creek
RICHMOND CITY
Shield Lake

rout Stocking Plan

ategory of Water			Category of Water
A		**ROANOKE COUNTY**	
		Glade Creek	A
C		Roanoke River (City)	A
B		Tinker Creek	A
		Roanoke River (Salem)	A
U		**ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY**	
		Mill Creek*	A
		Irish Creek*	B
B		South River	B
A		Maury River	A
		ROCKINGHAM COUNTY	
A		North Fork Shenandoah River	B
B		German River	C
		Dry River	B (NSF)
		Silver Lake	B
A		Shoemaker River	C
A		Briery Branch Lake*	A
		Hone Quarry Lake*	A
A		Hone Quarry Run*	C
A		Slate Lick Lake*	B
A		**RUSSELL COUNTY**	
		Big Cedar Creek	A
B		**SCOTT COUNTY**	
C		Little Stony Creek*	B
A		Stock Creek	C
B		Big Stony Creek	B
		Straight Fork (Lower)	C
A		Bark Camp Lake*	A
C (NSF)		**SHENANDOAH COUNTY**	
		Stony Creek	A
U		Mill Creek	B
		Peters Mill Creek*	C
B		Tomahawk Pond*	B
C		Passage Creek*	A
B		Little Passage Creek*	C
		SMYTH COUNTY	
B		South Fork Holston River (Lower)	A
B		Staley Creek	B
B (NSF)		South Fork Holston River (Gorge)*	A
A		Comers Creek*	C
C		Hurricane Creek*	C
C		Cressy Creek*	C
B (NSF)		Dickey Creek*	C
C (NSF)		Middle Fork Holston River (Marion)	A
C (NSF)		Middle Fork Holston River (Upper)	C
		TAZEWELL COUNTY	
U		Laurel Creek*	C
B (NSF)		Roaring Fork*	C
		Little Tumbling Creek	B
		Lake Witten	A
B		Lincolnshire Lake	A
		WARREN COUNTY	
U		Happy Creek	B

	Category of Water
Passage Creek	DH
WASHINGTON COUNTY	
Whitetop Laurel (Upper)*	A
Whitetop Laurel (Lower)*	A
Tennessee Laurel	A
Big Brumley Creek	C
Valley Creek	C
Big Tumbling Creek	A **
Straight Branch*	C
Bear Tree Lake*	A
WISE COUNTY	
Clear Creek*	C
Middle Fork Powell River	B
Pound River/N.Fk. Pound River	DH
WYTHE COUNTY	
Stoney Creek*	C
Gullion Fork Creek*	C
Gullion Fork Ponds*	C
West Fork Reed Creek*	C
Cripple Creek	A

Category A, stocked once in each of the following periods: October; November/December; January/February; March (twice); April (twice); May (twice)

Category B, stocked once during each of the following periods:
November 1-December 31; January/February; March; April-May 15 (twice)

Category C, stocked once during each of the following periods:
November/December; March; April

*	National Forest Waters
+	Fee fishing water that receives a put-n-take stocking after fee fishing season
DH	Delayed Harvest Water-Special Regulations apply
(NSF)	These waters **do not** receive fall & early winter stockings
U	Urban fishing waters, trout license required November 1 through April 30
**	A section of these waters is reserved for a fee fishing area

Stocking information for put-n-take stocking can be obtained by calling **1-804-525-FISH**. The recording is updated after 4 p.m. each day fish are stocked.

Trout Species Of Virginia

Trout belong to the salmon family (Salmonidae) which are native only to the northern hemisphere. Salmonidae includes trout, salmon, char, whitefish and grayling.

Brook Trout
(Salvelinus fontinalis)

Coloration: The brook trout is Virginia's most colorful trout species. Its back is dark olive green with light, wormy lines. Its sides have light spots on a dark background and red spots surrounded by a bluish halo. Often the entire side has a bluish tint. Its belly area is generally white with intense orange-red streaking during spawning season. Lower fins are distinctively marked with an outer white edge, black line and reddish coloration.

Distribution: The brook trout is endemic to eastern North America, meaning that originally it occurred in no other region. Initial distribution included the Atlantic seaboard south to Cape Cod, the Appalachians south to Georgia, then extending west through the Great Lakes to Minnesota and north to Hudson Bay. Due to its popularity as a gamefish, however, it has been introduced into many other regions and is now found in much of the western United States, Europe, South America, New Zealand and Asia. No other species of trout occurred in Virginia prior to man's stocking activities.

Biology: Brook trout generally spawn in October and November in Virginia. Spawning takes place in small streams, generally near the tail of a pool. Brook trout generally move upstream to spawn, often into the smaller headwater tributaries. An average female in Virginia lays approximately 100 eggs in a clean gravel bed. Eggs hatch about two months after they are spawned, and fry emerge from the gravel the following March.

Brook trout in Virginia reach sexual maturity at two years of age and an average length of 6.5 inches. Life span of this species is generally less than 4 years in this region, with most fish reaching about 9 to 12 inches by this time. Brook trout to 18 inches have been collected in Virginia and some streams contain occasional trout of 12 to 16 inches. However, very few fish in a population can be expected to reach this size even with restricted fishing.

The diet of brook trout consists of almost anything in the stream. Although their preferred foods consist of aquatic and terrestrial invertebrates; minnows, salamanders and frogs are also taken. In most cases, available food is a limiting factor in the unproductive mountain streams common to Virginia. Therefore, fish must be non-selective and opportunistic to compete. **State Record:** 5 lb., 10 oz., Big Stony Creek, Shenandoah County.

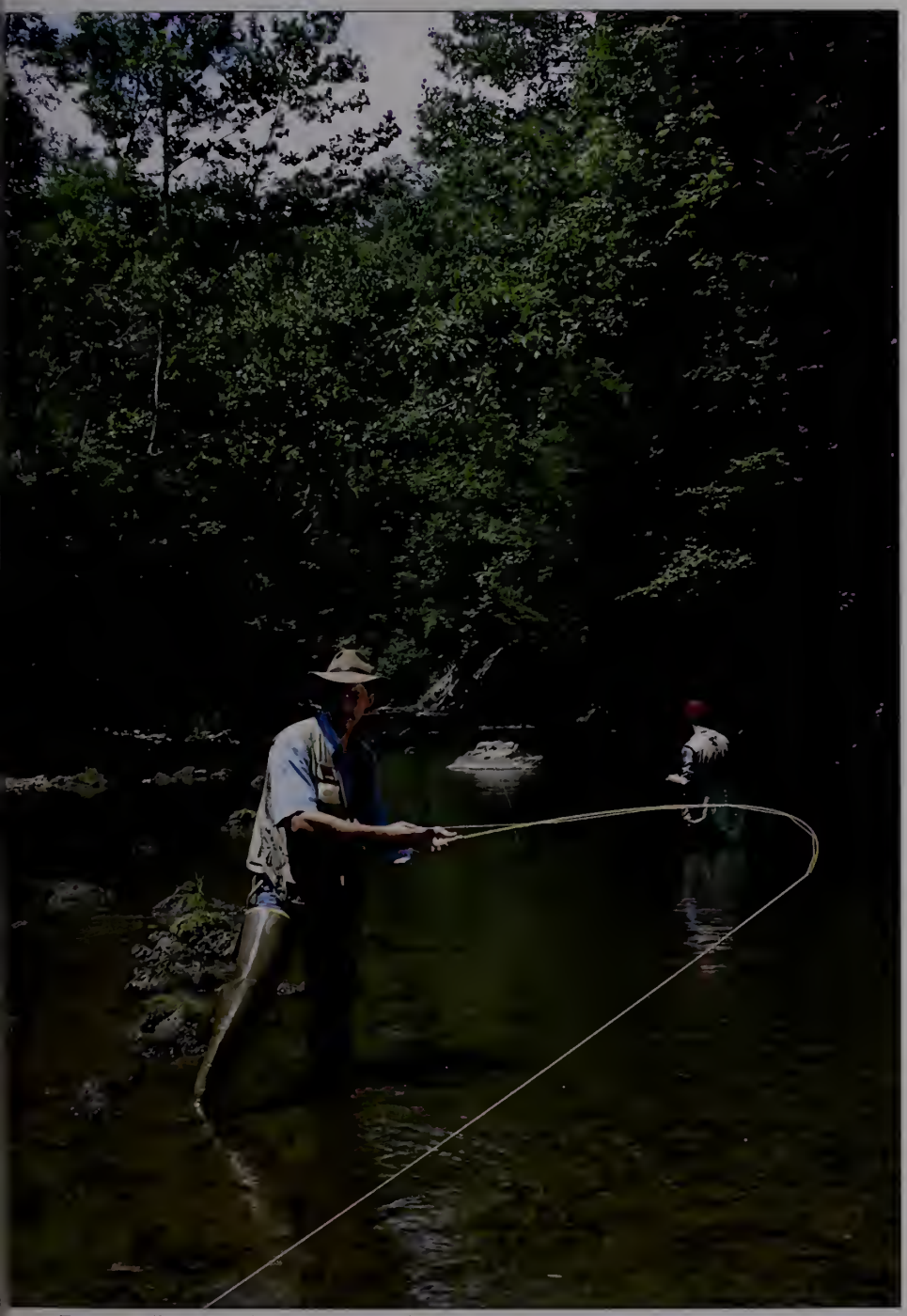
Rainbow Trout
(Onchorynchus mykiss)

Coloration: This fish has an olive-green back often with a silvery cast grading to a silvery white underside. The dominant characteristic is the pink band extending from the cheek to near the tail. Rainbows are generally well spotted with black spots intensifying on the upper fins and tail. The anal fin is often tipped with white in streambed fish.

Distribution: Rainbow trout are native to the Pacific Coast from Alaska to northern Mexico eastward to the continental divide. The steelhead is the same species, differing only in its need to migrate to and from the ocean. Rainbows have been widely distributed and now occur throughout the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, South America, Africa, Japan, Asia, Europe and Hawaii. In Virginia, the species is well established in the southwestern region of the state and is the dominant trout in the Mt. Rogers Area. North of Roanoke, distribution is quite scattered with most rainbow populations occurring in spring creeks. Although rainbow trout have displaced the brook trout over much of its range in the southeastern United States, most of the remaining brook trout habitat in Virginia does not appear suitable for the rainbow.

Biology: Life history of various rainbow trout populations can differ significantly. Certain strains will migrate from a lake or ocean into streams to spawn, while others may remain in the same stream throughout their life. Also, time of spawning can vary greatly between populations. Certain behavioral and physiological differences are genetic, pro-

Brown Trout



Top: trout illustrations by Duane Raver. Above: photo ©Dwight Dyke.

viding fish managers with additional management tools.

In Virginia, most wild rainbow trout populations are strictly stream residents. Spawning occurs in gravel beds similar to those used by brook trout. The major difference is that rainbow trout are generally spring spawners, laying eggs in March. Hatchery managers have altered this natural spawning time, however, to create fall spawners for hatchery purposes. This fall spawning characteristic is apparently retained by some of Virginia's wild rainbow trout populations. Rainbow trout also have greater reproductive potential than brooks, with females laying 800 to 1000 eggs depending on the size of the fish. This higher reproductive capacity is probably the reason over-exploitation is less of a problem than it is with brook trout.

The diet of rainbows is quite similar to that of brook trout. Larger rainbows often show a greater preference for minnows than do brook ies, but the main diet still consists of invertebrates. Rainbows are somewhat more selective than brook trout and therefore slightly more difficult to catch.

Rainbows have the potential to attain a much greater size than brook trout, but in Virginia's mountain streams they exhibit similar growth and age structure. In spring creeks and large reservoirs, however, rainbow trout over 5 pounds are not uncommon. **State Record:** 14 lb. 7 oz., Greer Trout Pond, Grayson County.

Brown Trout

(Salmo trutta)

Coloration: The dorsal area of this fish is usually brown, giving way to silvery sides and a yellowish underbelly. Pronounced black spots, often surrounded by a lighter halo, are spread along much of its body, extending well below the lateral line. In addition, irregularly shaped red or orange spots are also present along its sides. Some dark spots occur on the dorsal, adipose and tail fin, but such coloration is not as con-

centrated as on rainbows. The adipose fin is usually an orange/red color.

Distribution: Brown trout are native only to Europe and western Asia. They have been widely introduced elsewhere and are now found throughout the eastern United States, southern Canada and the Rocky Mountains, as well as in South America, Africa, Australia and New Zealand. In Virginia, brown trout distribution is limited, with most wild populations occuring in the Carroll, Floyd, and Patrick County areas. Small scattered populations also occur in the lower portion of many larger wild brook trout streams throughout the state.

Biology: Brown and brook trout require similar spawning habitats often utilizing the same sites in streams containing both species. Brown trout spawn later than brook trout, generally in November and December in Virginia. They have a higher reproductive potential than the other two species, mainly because of their larger size.

Brown trout reach sexual maturity at two to three years of age. The life expectancy of this species is much longer than that of the other two trout. Although life spans of 10 to 15 years have been reported, brown trout in Virginia usually do not exceed four to five years of age. The longer life span naturally increases the potential size of the brown despite annual growth rates similar to brook trout. Small mountain streams that rarely have brook trout over 12 inches will often produce brown trout over 20 inches.

Brown trout are highly carnivorous, maintaining a diet of insects, crustaceans, mollusks, salamanders, frogs, rodents, and fish. Fish and crayfish are the predominant diet of browns over 12 inches while smaller trout generally stick to invertebrates. Larger browns have a tendency to feed at dusk and after dark, making the larger fish difficult to catch. **State Record:** 14 lb. 12 oz., South Fork Holston River.

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Wild Trout Program

Wild trout populations require cold, well-oxygenated water, a clean stream bottom and good fish cover. In Virginia, most trout habitat losses occur through increased stream temperature, siltation and stream channel alteration.

Water temperature requirements may be the most critical factor facing Virginia's trout populations, and the state's generally warm climate and normally low summer stream flows do not help the situation. Most shaded mountain streams do not exceed 70°F during the summer, which is suitable for trout. Aquatic habitat and suitable water temperature can be maintained even during logging and farming operations when streamside vegetation is left intact. In most cases, maximum stream temperatures in the low 70's are within the tolerable range for trout, but such temperatures improve the habitat for other stream fishes which trout can not compete against.

Siltation and other more direct forms of habitat alteration, such as channelization, have also cost Virginia many miles of trout water. Silted stream bottoms decrease the stream's insect population, an important source of trout food. Siltation also makes trout reproduction difficult. Trout lay eggs in stream gravel, and clean gravel is necessary to insure movement of oxygenated water over the eggs. As little as a quarter-inch of silt over trout eggs can result in 100 percent mortality.

Alteration of stream channels is also of critical concern, not only due to the increased siltation it causes, but also due to the removal of fish cover and the potential to raise water temperatures. Trout require overhead cover such as an undercut bank, large rocks or submerged logs. When such cover is removed, the trout leave. Lack of suitable cover limits the number of large trout a stream can support.

Virginia lost many good wild trout populations prior to the mid-1970's due to habitat degradation.

However, many of the land-use practices that resulted in those losses—widespread stream channelization, poor logging techniques, removal of streamside vegetation, intensive agriculture in riparian areas, etc.—have been improved to the point where over the past two decades, physical habitat has been improving. In addition, the Department maintains a current inventory of wild trout streams that provides the data necessary to protect this critical habitat.

The Department's trout stream inventory identifies over 2300 miles of wild trout streams in Virginia. Biologists are encouraged to find that brook trout, the only trout species native to Virginia, still accounts for 80 percent of the wild trout resource in the state. Rainbow trout, a western introduction, have taken over many of the native brook trout streams in the other southeastern states. In fact, Virginia currently has more native brook trout streams than all other southeastern states combined.

Growth rates of wild trout, particularly brook trout, in Virginia are exceptional when compared with growth rates for similar streams in some other states. In most Virginia streams, adult brook trout average 8 to 10 inches by their third year of age. In respect to the number of streams available and the size of trout present, Virginia probably offers the best native brook trout fishing south of New England.

The major management problem associated with Virginia's wild trout population appears to be excessive fishing pressure on many of the more popular streams, resulting in over-exploitation. Unlike warmwater fish such as bass and bluegill, trout have a very low ability to reproduce. Therefore, in heavily fished areas, it is imperative to protect trout until they are able to spawn at least once. In order to accomplish this objective, a 7-inch minimum size limit has been imposed on all trout creeled in Virginia. Such a limit will allow most wild trout to reach spawning age before they are subject to harvest.

Special Regulation Wild Trout Streams

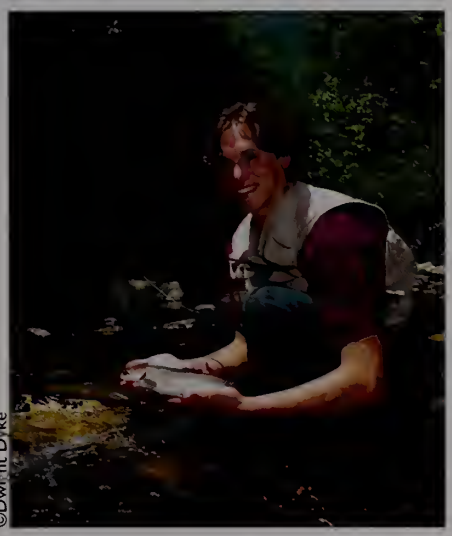
In the following streams, regulations require the use of single hook artificial lures and all trout less than 9 inches in length be returned to the water unharmed. The exceptions are the Rapidan River and its tributaries, Stewart's Creek, North Fork Moorman River, Dan River, East Fork of Chestnut Creek, Roaring Fork, and South Fork Holston River, which require the release of all fish caught, and Whitetop Laurel/Green Cove Creeks which have a 12-inch minimum size limit.

Buffalo River (Amherst County)

Special regulations apply to that portion of North Fork of Buffalo River and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest. Access is available by forest trail off of Forest Road 51 or from the end of State Route 635. Buffalo Creek is a moderate to high gradient stream dominated by large boulders and deep pools. The stream contains a good native brook trout population with numerous fish 8 to 10 inches in length.

Big and Little Wilson Creeks (Grayson County)

The special regulation sections of Big Wilson and Little Wilson Creeks and their tributaries include all portions of each stream within the boundaries of Grayson Highlands State Park and the Mount Rogers National Recreation Area. Big and Little Wilson Creeks provide the opportunity to fish for both wild rainbow and brook trout. Brook trout are primarily restricted to the headwaters of both streams and their tributaries. Rainbow trout can be found throughout the area. Big Wilson Creek offers some spectacular scenery. Large boulders predominate the stream channel, interspersed with deep pools associated with a steep gradient characterize the stream. Access can be gained through Grayson Highlands State Park or Route 806 and 817 off U.S. Route 58. Be prepared to do some hiking to fish this area.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Conway River/Devils Ditch (Greene County)

Special regulations apply to that portion of Conway River and its major tributary, Devils Ditch, within the Rapidan Wildlife Management Area. The stream contains brook trout in the upper reaches with wild brown trout scattered through the lower portions. Adult brook trout range from 7 to 11 inches in length, brown trout occasionally exceed 20 inches. The stream lies north of Stanardsville and can be reached by Route 615 from Graves Mill. The area adjoins the Shenandoah National Park.

Dan River (Patrick County)

The Dan River in Patrick County from the Pinnacles Powerhouse to Townes Dam is designated as a catch-and-release trout fishery. The Dan River below the Pinnacles Powerhouse (Kibler Valley) remains put-n-take trout water. Reproducing brown trout are the dominant species in the lower reaches of the section, while wild brook trout are found in the upper reaches. This three-mile section of the Dan River has been subjected to very low flows for years, however, a new agreement with the City of Danville has resulted in greatly improved flows. The special regulation section can be reached by taking Route 8 south of Stuart to Route 103 west, turn right on Route 648 at Claudeville and proceed to the powerhouse. In addition,

the section can be reached by taking Route 614 south from the Meadows of Dan. Turn left on Route 602 from Route 614 and proceed to Townes Dam. A permit from the City of Danville is required and can be obtained at no charge at the Pinnacles Powerhouse or from the City Utilities Department. Contact: City of Danville, Director of Electric Division, Department of Utilities, P.O. Box 3300, Danville, VA 24543. Phone: 804/799-5270.

East Fork of Chestnut Creek (Grayson and Carroll Counties)

East Fork of Chestnut Creek, locally known as Farmer's Creek, has recently been designated a catch-and-release trout fishery. The special regulation section includes all portions of the creek upstream of the Blue Ridge Parkway. The lower mile of the special regulation area is a low gradient native brook trout stream with numerous deep pools and undercut banks. The stream decreases in size and increases in gradient upstream and is characterized by numerous small plunge pools and a dense rhododendron canopy. Adult brook trout average 8-13 inches in length with occasional larger fish in the lower reaches. The stream lies south of Galax, crossing the Blue Ridge Parkway a short distance east of Route 89.

Little Stony Creek (Giles County)

Special regulations apply to that portion of Little Stony Creek in the Jefferson National Forest. Most of the special section is below the Cascades waterfall. The upper reaches of Little Stony Creek contain native brook trout, but rainbow trout comprise most of the trout population below the Cascades. Adult rainbows average 7 to 12 inches in length. The area is heavily used by hikers and picnickers. The stream is located near Pembroke and can be reached by Route 623.

Little Stony Creek (Shenandoah County)

Little Stony Creek is a small mountain brook trout stream. The special regulations apply to that portion of stream above Woodstock Reservoir. Adult brook trout presently average 7 to 10 inches in length. The stream is located west of Woodstock and Forest Service Road 92 crosses the lower portion of the special regulation section. Much of the upper reaches can only be reached by foot trail.

North Creek (Botetourt County)

The upper section of the stream (above the first bridge upstream of the North Creek campground) is designated for special regulations, while the lower portion remains put-n-take trout water. Rainbow trout predominate, although brook trout are present in the headwater tributaries. Adult trout will range from 7 to 12 inches. The stream is located east of Buchanan, a short distance from I-81. The Jefferson National Forest maintains a campground adjacent to the stream and vehicular access is available along most of its length.

North Fork Moormans River (Albemarle County)

That portion of the Moormans River lying within the Shenandoah National Park is designated as fish-for-fun. The stream has historically contained an excellent population of brook trout with numerous adults of 8 to 12 inches. In addition, a small population of wild brown trout can be found in the lower half of the stream. However, this drainage was struck with devastating floods during June, 1995. The stream suffered significant habitat damage and resident trout populations have been severely reduced. It will require several years for this population to recover. Access to the Moormans River has been restored over State Route 614 past Sugar Hollow Reservoir but much of the streamside trail no longer exists. Call the Shenandoah National Park for current information.

Ramsey's Draft (Augusta County)

Ramsey's Draft and its tributaries within the George Washington National Forest provide over 10 miles of native brook trout water. Most of this section of stream is located within the Ramsey's Draft Wilderness Area providing the angler with the opportunity to fish for quality native trout in a remote setting. Summer flows are usually quite low in this stream so plan to fish Ramsey's Draft during the springtime. To reach Ramsey's Draft, drive 15 miles west of Churchville on State Route 250 and look for the Mountain Home Picnic Area on the right. A foot trail parallels the stream from the picnic area.

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Rapidan River (Madison County)

The Rapidan River is Virginia's best-known trout stream. Not only was it the state's first special regulation stream, it was also the site of the Presidential Retreat established by President Hoover. Much of the original Camp Hoover is still intact and is occasionally used. The special regulation area of the Rapidan includes all the stream and its tributaries within the Shenandoah National Park and the Rapidan Wildlife Man-

agement Area. The stream generally contains an excellent native brook trout population with good numbers of 10 to 11- inch adults.

This stream drainage was hit by devastating floods in June, 1995 and September, 1996. Stream habitat has been severely impacted along the lower reaches and in one tributary, the Staunton River. Impacts to the resident trout population can be expected to be high in the Staunton River and lower reaches of the Rapidan. The impact of these floods on trout populations in the upper Rapidan and other tributaries is much less severe. Access to the Rapidan has been restored over Route 662 from Graves Mill and over Route 649 from Criglersville. Call the Shenandoah National Park or local VDGIF office for current conditions.

Roaring Fork (Tazewell County)

This special regulation area is located within the boundaries of the Beartown Wilderness Area of the Jefferson National Forest. Acidification of this stream resulting in a steadily declining brook trout population prompted the inclusion of this stream section into Virginia's catch and release trout regulations. Access to the special regulated section is difficult and some hiking will be required. Access can be gained from Forest Service Road 222 off of Route 16, south of Tazewell.

St. Mary's River (Augusta County)

The special regulation section includes all portions of the St. Mary's River above the gate at the National Forest boundary. It is a fairly high gradient stream with a number of waterfalls. Although water levels can get quite low along lower reaches, flows are much improved upstream and large, deep pools provide ample trout cover. Adult brook trout average 8 to 12 inches in length. Due to acidification of the stream in recent years, brook trout have replaced rainbows as the dominant trout species. The stream lies east of Raphine off of Route 608 a short distance from I-81. Most of the area is accessible by foot trail only and backpacking is popular .

South Fork Holston River (Smyth County)

This section of the South Fork Holston River lies within the boundaries of VDGIF's Buller Fish Hatchery. From the concrete dam downstream to the lower boundary of the hatchery property, only artificial lures with single hooks may be used and all trout caught must be released. This special regulation section of stream provides an excellent opportunity to catch trout of trophy size. Access can be gained through the Buller Fish Hatchery property off of Route 650, south of Marion.

Stewart's Creek (Carroll County)

Stewart's Creek is another of the catch-and-release trout fisheries in the state. It is a high-gradient native brook trout stream with numerous plunge pools, rock ledges, and a dense rhododendron canopy for cover. Approximately 4.5 miles of Stewart's Creek and its two major tributaries, North Fork and South Fork Stewart's Creek, were opened to the public in 1989 for year-round fishing. Only single hook, artificial lures can be used.

Stewart's Creek Wildlife Management Area is southeast of Galax on the east side of the Blue Ridge Parkway. Take Exit 1 off I-77. Follow the trailblazer signs to the area.

Whitetop Laurel/Green Cove Creeks (Washington County)

The special regulation area includes the lower mile of Green Cove Creek plus Whitetop Laurel Creek from the mouth of Green Cove to the first bridge above the village of Taylors Valley. Whitetop Laurel is one of Virginia's largest and most beautiful wild trout streams. Wild rainbow trout dominate, with most adults in

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the 7 to 14-inch class. A few wild brown trout provide occasional trophy fish. The special regulation area is located east of Damascus near the Tennessee line and lies within the Mount Rogers Recreation Area. Minimum size limit in this section is 12 inches.

Shenandoah National Park

The Park provides an entire region of special regulation trout streams extending from Front Royal to Waynesboro. Park regulations have been modified in the past year and most streams are now open to fishing. However, only a portion of those streams open to angling allow for harvest of trout. Check with SNP for their annual list of streams where harvest is permitted. All fishing in the Park is restricted to the use of single hook, artificial lures. In streams allowing harvest, the creel limit is six trout per day, all of which must be nine inches or more in length. Most streams within the Park contain good populations of native brook trout while a few of the larger east slope streams also contain isolated populations of brown trout.

Fingerling Stocking Program

The fingerling stocking program is the smallest of the state's three management programs, but also the fastest growing. Established in the mid-1970s, it is designed to take advantage of the natural potential of high-elevation lakes, deep reservoirs, cold-water tailwaters and spring-fed streams, to produce quality trout fishing opportunities where wild fisheries are not possible due to lack of natural reproduction.

Because summer water temperatures are usually a limiting factor to trout survival in Virginia, under this program a stream or lake must provide suitable year-round water temperatures for trout survival, have good habitat, and be productive enough to provide adequate food for good growth.

Suitable trout waters are stocked once annually with fingerling or subcatchable (smaller than the legal size limit) trout, and often length limits and angling gear restrictions are imposed to protect these small fish until they reach harvestable size. The special regulation gear restrictions imposed are necessary to avoid high hooking mortality rates that occur when bait fishing is permitted. These fish will often be caught several times before they eventually reach harvestable size, and the program can only be successful if hooking mortality remains low.

Depending on the length limit, these stocked fish will not reach a legal size for six months to two years. During this time, trout lose most of their hatchery characteristics, both in appearance and behavior, and create a fishery that approaches a wild one in terms of fishing experience.

Some of Virginia's most exciting trout fishing opportunities can be found within our fingerling stocking program, and by stocking small fish once a year, a high quality fish-

ery can be developed at a fraction of the cost of the more common put-n-take program. Many anglers have discovered this quality angling and participation in the program is rapidly growing. VDGIF recognizes this growing interest and is continuing to develop new waters in the state.

Trout Lakes

The warm summer climate of Virginia limits the potential for development of good trout populations in lakes. Numerous small ponds and lakes are stocked under the catchable stocking program (see *Trout Stocking Plan*), however, very few provide good year-round trout habitat for management of wild or put-n-grow trout fisheries. In order to provide adequate coldwater habitat in Virginia, a lake must either be located at high elevations where cool summer temperatures prevail, or be deep enough to maintain a cold layer of water. Virginia has five small lakes at sufficient elevation for trout and three reservoirs deep enough to provide a two-story fishery. These two-story reservoirs stratify during summer months, providing an upper, warmwater layer where fish such as bass, bluegill, crappie and catfish exist, and a deep, coldwater layer suitable for trout.

Laurel Bed Lake (Russell County)

Laurel Bed Lake is a 330-acre, mountaintop impoundment located approximately 10 miles northwest of Saltville. The lake is included in the Clinch Mountain Fee Fishing Area and, in addition to providing a unique fishery, is used to augment flow to Big Tumbling Creek during summer months. As with the remaining sections of the fee fishing area, a daily permit is required in addition to a state fishing license. The fishery has been based almost entirely on brook trout in past years. Fishing is usually excellent through June with limits of trout being common. Favored fishing methods include nightcrawlers, mealworms, flies and spinners. Minnows are not allowed at the lake in order to prevent introduction of other fish species. Fishing usually becomes sporadic as the lake temperature increases, with fish hitting well for a few days, then slacking off for several days. Favorite summer fishing spots are located around coves where spring branches enter. Late summer and early fall fishing is dependent on the number of fish that survive through the summer, and changes significantly from year to year. Limited camping is permitted on the management area and a concession is in operation.

Lexington City Reservoir (Rockbridge County)

The Lexington City Reservoir is a 22-acre, high elevation lake located in Rockbridge County. It is a put-n-grow lake that is stocked annually with brook trout. The brookies have done well in the reservoir and many measure 9 to 13 inches in length.

It is a long hike across USFS lands to the reservoir and primitive camping is permitted. General fishing regulations are in effect and no trout stamp is required.

Mills Creek and Coles Run Reservoirs (Augusta County)

Mills Creek (17 acres) and Coles Run (13 acres) are located in the Pedlar Ranger District of the George Washington National Forest. They are both old Augusta County Water Supply Reservoirs that were first opened to fishing in 1990.

The lakes are managed as put-n-grow lakes and are stocked annually with small brook trout. Samples collected show good populations of 10 to 12-inch brook trout.

There are no facilities and access by foot is about a half mile to Coles Run and 1½ miles to Mills Creek. For more information, call the Pedlar Ranger District in Buena Vista at (540) 261-6105. Access is west of Route 664 at Sherando off of Forest Road 42.

Skidmore Lake (Switzer Dam)

Skidmore Lake is a 104-acre impoundment located off of Route 33 west of Harrisonburg. The dam was built by the Soil Conservation Service for flood control and water supply, and is now managed by the City of Harrisonburg. An access road is available off of Route 33. Boats, without motors, are permitted but must be carried to the water as no ramp is provided. Fingerling brook trout have been stocked since 1976 and fishing has been permitted since 1979. Angler success has been good with most fish in the 8 to 14-inch range. In addition, occasional large brook trout of 2 to 3 pounds have been taken. No camping is permitted at the lake, but primitive camping is available in the National Forest nearby.

Trophy Trout Lakes

Regulations on the following two-story reservoirs were changed in 1995 to reflect the potential of these lakes to produce trophy-sized trout. The creel limit on these reservoirs was reduced to two trout per day with a minimum size limit of 16 inches. These changes should result in the availability of many more large trout this year.

John W. Flannagan Reservoir (Dickenson County)

This 1143-acre Army Corps of Engineers reservoir is located in the Cumberland Mountains near the Virginia-Kentucky state line. Nearly 50 miles of rugged shoreline terrain surround the lake perimeter. The maximum lake depth is 166 feet with an average depth of 59 feet. Beginning in October of each year, the lake level is dropped 16 feet below the normal summer pool. These conditions remain throughout the winter months until early spring.

The lake was managed primarily as a put-n-take fishery for rainbow trout from 1966 to 1976. In 1991, stocking resumed to establish the lake as a trophy fishery. Sub-catchable McConaughy rainbow and Crawford brown trout are now stocked yearly and trout in excess of four pounds have been collected.

Any good shad imitation fished below 35 feet should entice these trout to hit. In the spring, early summer and late fall, trout should be found throughout the entire lake. However, after August 1, fishing the

main body of the lake from the junction boat ramp to the dam is recommended.

Several launch ramps exist and boat access areas are provided at the spillway, lower Twin Area, junction area and both the Cranesnest and Pound River areas. Campgrounds are also available. Contact the U.S. Corps of Engineers, John W. Flannagan Dam and Reservoir, Route 1, Box 268, Haysi, VA 24256-9736.

Lake Moomaw (Alleghany/Bath Counties)

This flood control reservoir was completed in 1981 with the closing of the Gathright Dam on the Jackson River. It resulted in the formation of a 13-mile long, 2530-acre reservoir with more than 43 miles of shoreline.

Much of the shoreline is adjacent to the 13,428-acre Gathright Wildlife Management Area which is owned and managed by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. The average depth of the lake is 80 feet and flow augmentation results in a normal 5 to 15-foot drawdown by late summer.

Trout management at the reservoir consists of stocking subcatchable brown trout and McConaughy strain of rainbow trout.

Brown trout fishing has been good in recent years. Brown trout of 2 to 5 pounds should be numerous in 1997. McConaughy strain rainbow trout are doing very well, also. Most trout are caught by trolling with shad imitation crankbaits, some are caught still fishing with live shad 25 feet down and others by jump fishing. Some are caught incidental to bass fishing.

The area around Moomaw provides nearly year-round opportunities for boating water sports, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking, birding, sight-seeing, photography, and hunting.

Boats are restricted to a maximum length of 25 feet. No house boats are allowed and excessive noise is prohibited. Trailer-launched boats must be launched at ramps at Fortney Branch, Bolar Flat, or Coles Point. Canoes and cartops can be launched at Coles Mountain Fishing Access, McClintock Bridge, McClintock Point, and Midway.

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The lake is open 24 hours a day, year-round. There is a 12-inch size limit on bass. Neither a trout license or National Forest stamp is required.

The Bolar Mountain Recreation Area provides camping, swimming beaches, restrooms and picnic grounds. Bolar Flat has a picnic area, a four-lane boat dock, a courtesy dock, a marina, and restrooms. There are primitive camping areas at Greenwood and McClintock Point. The Morris Hill Campground and picnic area, the four-lane Fortney Branch ramp and courtesy dock, and the Coles Mountain Area are located on the south end of the lake in Alleghany County. A daily fee is charged for swimming, picnicking, camping, and use of boat ramps.

For facilities information, contact the James River Ranger District in Covington (540) 962-2214; the Warm Springs Ranger District in Hot Springs (540) 839-2521 or 839-2442; or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in Covington (540) 962-1138.

Philpott Reservoir (Henry County)

Philpott Lake is a 2880-acre reservoir located west of Martinsville. Warmwater fishing is the major attraction, but trout are also stocked annually. Stockings generally consist of 8 to 9-inch McConaughy rainbow trout released in the fall of the year. Fishing success has been highly variable, probably due to the varying volume of the summer coldwater habitat available. Trout can be caught throughout the lake during spring, fall, and winter, but during summer months, most successful fishermen fish deep at night. Philpott generally produces some of the larger rainbow trout taken each year, with catches up to 7 to 8 pounds.

Special Regulations

Jackson River Tailwater (Allegheny County)

The Jackson River below Gathright Dam provides almost 19 miles of high quality trout fishing on a large river. The river is legally navigable and is easily floated by canoe. Six access points are available for public use, located at about three mile intervals. Sub-catchable (6 to 8-inch) rainbow and brown trout are stocked annually in the fall. The regulations require the use of single

hook (one point), artificial lures only from the Gathright Dam downstream to the dam at Westvaco. All trout caught in this section of the river must be immediately released. Fish other than trout may be creeled. Public bank fishing access to the river is limited to the access sites and anglers wishing to fish from the banks are required to obtain landowner's permission. In addition, several landowners have established private rights to the fishery even if anglers are fishing from a boat. These areas should be posted and information is available from the Department. For specific questions, contact the Verona Regional Office (see page 24).

In the following streams, special regulations require the use of single hook, artificial lures and restrict creel to fish over 12 inches in length. Trout from 6 to 8-inches are stocked periodically and allowed to grow for a year or two before being creeled. This approach can be used in streams that maintain good flow, cool summer waters and are productive enough for good growth of trout.

Smith Creek (Alleghany County)

The special regulation section extends from the Forest Service boundary above the old C & O Dam upstream 2.5 miles to the Clifton Forge Dam. Within this section, subcatchable brown trout are stocked once annually. The stream contains good numbers of 8 to 12-inch brown trout with occasional fish to 20 inches. The stream maintains good flow throughout the year and provides wide, flat pools and good fly-fishing opportunities. The best way to access this stream is by Route 606 from Clifton Forge to the access road for the Clifton Forge Water Plant. Fishermen must park at the entrance and walk a half mile to the stream.

Snake Creek (Carroll County)

Special regulations apply to all of Big Snake Creek below Hull Ford and all of Little Snake Creek below the junction of Routes 922 and 674. The stream is located just north of Fancy Gap. Snake Creek is a moderate gradient, softwater, gravel bottomed stream with an average width of about 18 feet. Holdover of stocked fish is good along with a fair population of native brook trout.

Trophy Trout Streams

Management of a few selected streams as trophy trout water is relatively new to Virginia. Regulations restrict fishing to the use of single hook artificial lures and the creel to 2 fish per day over 16 inches (except for Mossy Creek where the creel is one fish per day over 20 inches). Mossy Creek, Sinking Creek, and Smith Creek, furthermore, are restricted to fly-fishing only. The management approach is to stock fingerling trout (5-6") in high quality streams where they will grow exceptionally fast.

Buffalo Creek (Rockbridge County)

The special regulation area includes that section of stream from the confluence of Colliers Creek upstream 2.9 miles to the confluence of North and South Forks of Buffalo Creek. The stream flows through private land and requires a written landowner permit to fish, which is available from the VDGIF office in Verona (please include a SASE). Brown and rainbow trout are stocked annually as subcatchables and good numbers of 10 to 16-inch fish are available. Trophy fish of 5 to 8 pounds have been caught in the stream. Buffalo Creek can be reached by taking Route 251 from Lexington.

Dan River (Patrick County)

The special regulation section is located within the Pinnacles Hydroelectric Project in what is known as the "Grand Canyon" of Virginia. The terrain is quite rugged and the scenery is spectacular. The section contains approximately six miles of stream and extends from Talbott Dam downstream to the confluence with Townes Reservoir. The fishery is maintained by natural reproduction and consists primarily of rainbow trout in the 8 to 12-inch size range and brown trout in the 8 to 18-inch size range. The upper reaches of the special regulation section can be reached by taking Route 614 south from the Meadows of Dan. Turn right on Route 601 and proceed to Talbott Dam. The lower reach of the section can only be accessed by boat at the upper end of Townes Reservoir. A permit from the City of Danville is required and can be obtained at no charge from the City Utilities Department or on site at the Pinnacles Powerhouse. Contact: City of Danville, Director of Electric Division, Department of Utilities, P.O. Box 3300, Danville, VA 24543. Phone: 804/788-5270.

Jackson River (Bath County)

The regulations for this section of the Jackson River have been changed for 1997. To take advantage of the growth potential of the stream, the size limit for taking trout has been increased to 16 inches and the daily creel reduced to two. This section is stocked several times a year with catchable-sized trout and good populations are always present. The special regulation section extends from the USFS swinging bridge located just above the mouth of Muddy Run, upstream 3 miles to the last ford on FS 481D. This section can only be reached by foot travel, either from the Hidden Valley area or off of Route 623 and FS Road 481. The area provides a remote fishing opportunity on a relatively large, productive stream. A trout license is required to fish.

Mossy Creek (Augusta County)

The special section includes about 4 miles of stream extending upstream from the Augusta/Rockingham County line. The stream is located just off of Route 42 south of Bridgewater. Fishing in Mossy Creek is restricted to fly-fishing only and a written landowner permit must be obtained (available from the VDGIF office in Verona. Please include a SASE). Mossy Creek is a classic, meadow limestone stream aver-

aging about 15 feet in width and flowing through open pastures. Brown trout in the 3 to 7-pound class are available to fishermen.

Sinking Creek (Giles and Craig Counties)

The special area includes two sections of stream. The first section extends from a cable with VDGIF sign 0.4 miles below the State Route 703 low-water bridge, upstream 1.8 miles to a cable with VDGIF sign (which is 0.1 mile above the Reynolds farm covered bridge). The second section runs from a cable with VDGIF sign 1.0 mile below the State Route 642 bridge, upstream to a cable with VDGIF sign (which is 0.5 miles above the State Route 642 bridge in Craig County). Brown and rainbow trout are stocked annually and angling is restricted to fly-fishing only. A fishing permit is required to fish this stream. Permits may be obtained at the VDGIF office in Blacksburg and locally at the Twin Oaks Grocery Store on State Route 42 in Craig County, the Super Value Grocery Store in Newport, and the Orvis Shop in Roanoke.

Smith Creek (Rockingham County)

The special section includes approximately 1.5 miles of stream near Lacy Spring. Smith Creek flows through private farmland and requires a written landowner permit to fish, which is available from VDGIF office in Verona (please include a SASE). Brown trout fingerlings are stocked annually in the fall. Good numbers of 10 to 16-inch trout are available and fish over 4 pounds have been reported.

Smith River (Henry County)

The special area includes the posted section extending 3 miles downstream from Towne Creek near the town of Bassett. Smith River is Virginia's most noted trophy trout stream. The historic state record 18 pound, 11 ounce brown trout was taken in 1979 and numerous trout exceeding 10 pounds have been caught. Smith River is a large, flat, tailwater stream receiving coldwater discharges from Philpott Dam.

South Fork Holston River (Smyth County)

The special regulation section is located south of Marion and west of the community of Sugar Grove off of Route 16. Two miles of the stream, which extends from just below the confluence of Comers Creek upstream, flows through National Forest and private land. Permission is not required prior to fishing within the privately owned sections. Recently included in Virginia's special trout stream regulations, the South Fork offers the opportunity to fish for both trophy rainbow and brown trout. An abundance of 10 to 14-inch trout and some trout in excess of the 16 inch minimum size limit are available.

License Requirements

All residents 16 years of age and older are required to possess a *state fishing license* to fish for trout. Persons who fish in designated stocked waters (those waters listed in the *Trout Stocking Plan*) must have an additional *trout license*. A *National Forest Stamp* is necessary when fishing in most waters within the George Washington or Thomas Jefferson National Forests. Refer to your fishing regulation pamphlet for specific exemptions and costs of licenses.

When fishing in non-designated trout waters, such as wild trout streams or special regulations areas (not listed in the Trout Stocking Plan), the angler only needs a *state fishing license*. However, some of the special regulation areas require a *signed permit card* which can be obtained at no cost from certain VDGIF offices and streamside landowners (refer to individual stream descriptions in this guide for details).

Out-of-state anglers who fish designated stocked waters need to purchase both a *non-resident state fishing license* (five-day, non-resident licenses are available), a *non-resident trout license*, and a *National Forest Stamp* (where appropriate.) For fishing in wild trout or most special regulation waters (except the Jackson River), the non-resident needs only a *non-resident state fishing license*, the appropriate *National Forest Stamp* and *special regulation permits*.

Fee-fishing areas require a *state fishing license* and a *daily fishing permit* that can be obtained on site.

Senior citizens holding previously issued (but no longer available) $5 *senior lifetime fishing licenses* do not need to purchase any additional fishing or trout licenses. Plus, Virginia residents 65 years or older do not need to purchase a *National Forest Stamp*.

Please consult the regulation pamphlet available where you purchased your license for specific restrictions on size, creel, gear restrictions, and season lengths.

More Questions About Trout Fishing?

Call or write to your closest VDGIF office:

Richmond
P.O. Box 11104
Richmond, VA 23230
804/367-1000/VTDD

Verona
P.O. Box 996
Verona, VA 24482
540/248-9360

Vinton
209 East Cleveland Avenue
Vinton, VA 24179
540/857-7704

Blacksburg
2001 South Main Street
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540/951-7923

Lynchburg
910 Thomas Jefferson Rd.
Forest, VA 24551-9223
804/525-7522

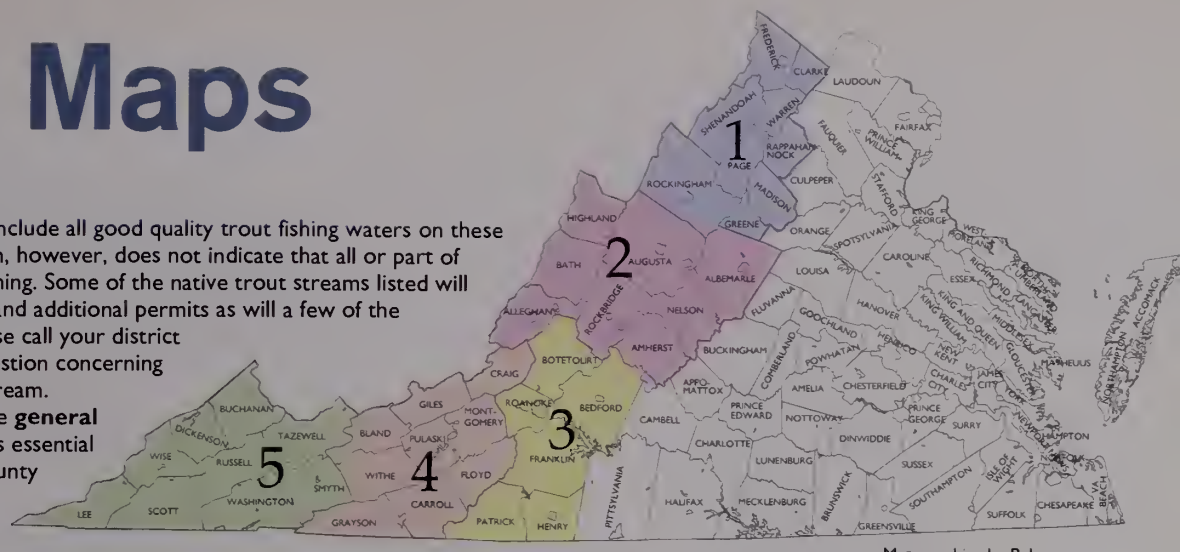
Marion
Rt. 1, Box 107
Marion, VA 24354
540/783-4860

Area Maps

Caution:

We have made an effort to include all good quality trout fishing waters on these area maps. Inclusion of a stream, however, does not indicate that all or part of the stream is open to public fishing. Some of the native trout streams listed will require landowner permission and additional permits as will a few of the special regulation streams. Please call your district fisheries office if you have a question concerning private vs. public fishing on a stream.

In addition, we have given the **general** location of each stream, but it is essential to obtain a topographical or county map to pinpoint specific locations before you start your fishing trip.

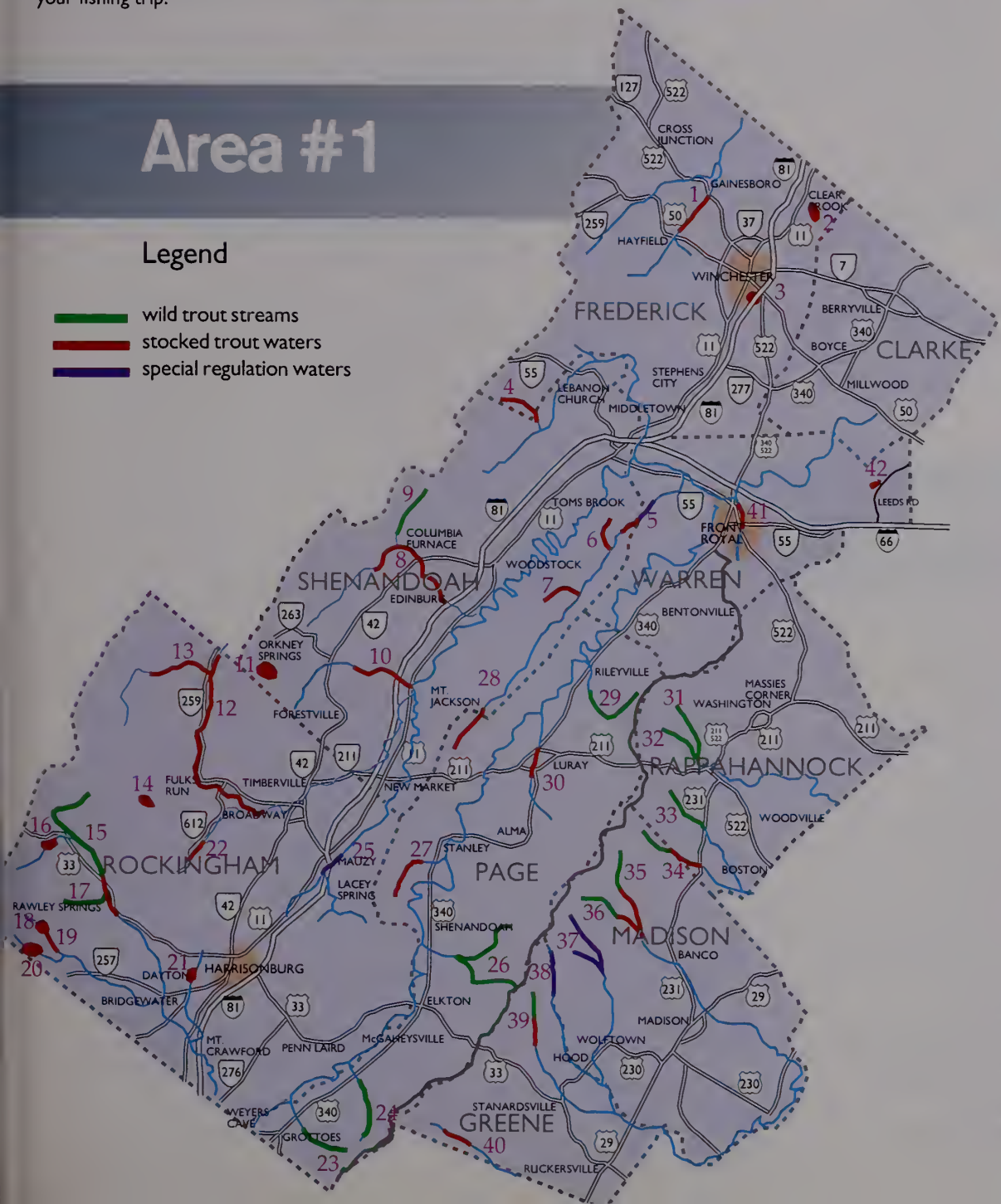


Map graphics by Pels

Area #1

Legend

- wild trout streams
- stocked trout waters
- special regulation waters



Frederick County
(1) Hogue Creek
(2) Clearbrook Lake
(3) Winchester Lake
(4) Paddy Run

Shenandoah County
(5) Passage Creek
(6) Little Passage Creek
(7) Peters Mill Creek
(8) Stony Creek
(9) Little Stony Creek
(10) Mill Creek
(11) Tomahawk Pond

Rockingham County
(12) N. Fk. Shenandoah River
(13) German River
(14) Slate Lick Lake
(15) Dry River
(16) Switzer Lake
(17) Blacks Run
(18) Hone Quarry Lake
(19) Hone Quarry Run
(20) Briery Branch Lake
(21) Silver Lake
(22) Shoemaker River
(23) Madison Run (SNP)
(24) Big Run (SNP)
(25) Smith Creek

Page County
(26) Naked Creek (SNP)
(27) Cub Run
(28) Upper Passage Creek
(29) Jeremys Run (SNP)
(30) Hawksbill Creek

Rappahannock County
(31) Piney River (SNP)
(32) N. Fk. Thornton River (SNP)
(33) Hazel River (SNP)

Madison County
(34) Hughes Rivers (SNP)
(35) Robinson River (SNP)
(36) Rose River (SNP)
(37) Rapidan River (SNP)

Greene County
(38) Conway River
(39) South River
(40) Lynch River

Warren County
(41) Happy Creek

Fauquier County
(42) Thompson WMA Pond

Area #2

Augusta County
(1) North River (Upper)
(2) Elkhorn Lake
(3) Hearthstone Lake
(4) North River (gorge)
(5) North River (Natural Chimney)
(6) Mossy Creek
(7) Ramseys Draft
(8) Braley Pond
(9) Falls Hollow
(10) Meadow Run (SNP)
(11) Paine Run (SNP)
(12) South River
(13) Back Creek
(14) Lower Sherando Lake
(15) Upper Sherando Lake
(16) Mills Creek Reservoir/Mills Creek
(17) Coles Run Reservoir
(18) St. Marys River

Albemarle County
(19) N. Fk. Moormans River (SNP)
(20) Doyles River (SNP)
(21) Sugar Hollow Reservoir

Allegheny County
(22) Shawvers Run
(23) Jerrys Run
(24) Pounding Mill Creek
(25) Smith Creek
(26) Clifton Forge Reservoir
(27) Smith Creek
(28) Simpson Creek
(29) Jackson River tailwater

Bath County
(30) Douthat Lake
(31) Wilson Creek
(32) Pads Creek
(33) Cascades Creek
(34) Lake Moomaw
(35) Back Creek
(36) Little Back Creek
(37) Back Creek
(38) Jackson River
(39) Muddy Run
(40) Jordan Run
(41) Mares Run
(42) Spring Run
(43) Bullpasture River

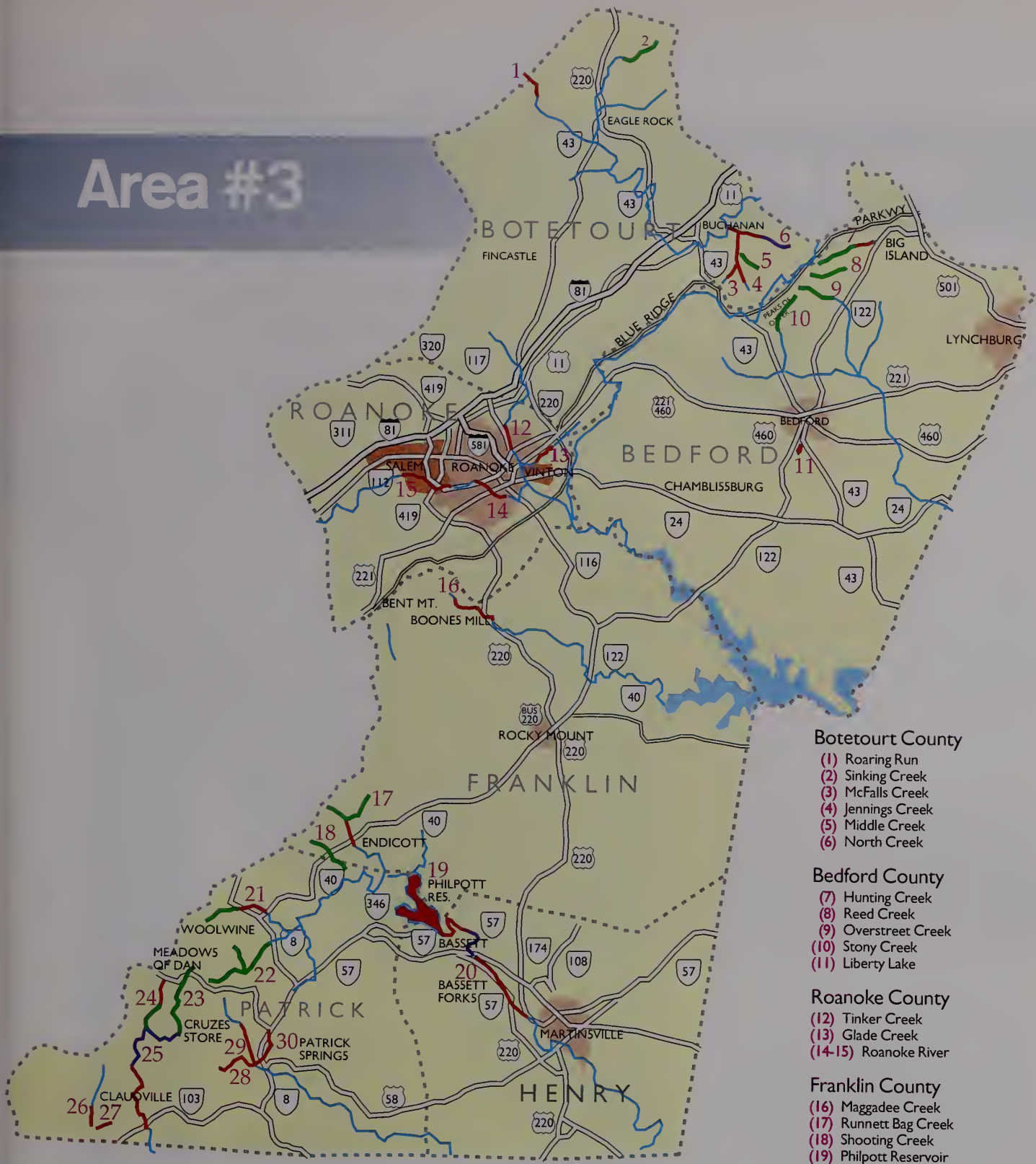
Highland County
(43) Bullpasture River
(44) Benson Run
(45) S. Br. Potomac River
(46) Laurel Fork

Amherst County
(47) Little Irish Creek
(48) Pedlar River
(49) Davis Mill Creek
(50) N. Fk. Buffalo River
(51) Little Piney River
(52) S. Fk. Piney River
(53) N. Fk. Piney River

Nelson County
(54) Shoe Creek
(55) S. Fk. Tye River
(56) N. Fk. Tye River
(57) Tye River
(58) South Rockfish River

Rockbridge County
(59) S. Fk. Buffalo Creek
(60) Buffalo Creek
(61) Lexington Reservoir
(62) Mill Creek
(63) Guys Run
(64) Maury River
(65) South River
(66) Irish Creek
(67) Big Marys Creek

Area #3



Legend

- wild trout streams
- stocked trout waters
- special regulation waters

Botetourt County

(1) Roaring Run
(2) Sinking Creek
(3) McFalls Creek
(4) Jennings Creek
(5) Middle Creek
(6) North Creek

Bedford County

(7) Hunting Creek
(8) Reed Creek
(9) Overstreet Creek
(10) Stony Creek
(11) Liberty Lake

Roanoke County

(12) Tinker Creek
(13) Glade Creek
(14-15) Roanoke River

Franklin County

(16) Maggadee Creek
(17) Runnett Bag Creek
(18) Shooting Creek
(19) Philpott Reservoir

Henry County

(20) Smith River

Patrick County

(21) Rock Castle Creek
(22) Smith River
(23) Dan River
(24) Round Meadow Creek
(25) Dan River
(26) Ararat River
(27) Clarks Creek
(28) South Mayo River
(29) Poorhouse Creek
(30) N. Fk. South Mayo River

Area #4

Craig County
(1) Potts Creek
(2) N. Fk. Barbours Creek/ Barbours Creek
(3) Meadow Creek
(4) Sinking Creek

Giles County
(5) Big Stoney Creek
(6) Little Stoney Creek
(7) Johns Creek
(8) Mill Creek
(9) Dismal Creek

Montgomery County
(10) Craig Creek
(11) Poverty Creek
(12) Toms Creek
(13) S. Fk. Roanoke River

Floyd County
(14) Goose Creek
(15) Little River
(16) W. Fk. Little River
(17) Howell Creek
(18) Rush Fork
(19) Mira Fork
(20) Little Indian Creek
(21) Burkes Fork
(22) Laurel Fork

Carroll County
(22) Laurel Fork
(23) Big Reed Island Creek
(24) Snake Creek
(25) Elk Spur Branch
(26) Lovills Creek
(27) Stewarts Creek
(28) Crooked Creek
(29) Little Reed Island Creek

Pulaski County
(30) Peak Creek

Bland County
(31) Laurel Fork Creek
(32) Wolf Creek
(33) Lick Creek

Wythe County
(34) W. Fk. Reed Creek
(35) Guillon Fork/ Guillon Fork Ponds
(36) Stoney Creek
(37) Dry Run
(38) Cripple Creek

Grayson County
(39) Hales Lakes
(40) Elk Creek
(41) Middle Fox Creek
(42) Fox Creek
(43) Big Wilson Creek
(44) Helton Creek
(45) Chestnut Creek

Area #5

Dickenson County
(1) Russell Fork River
(2) Pound River
(3) Flanagan Reservoir
(4) Cranesnest River
(5) Frying Pan Creek

Buchanan County
(6) Russell Fork River
(7) Dismal River

Wise County
(8) Middle Fork Powell River
(10) Clear Creek
(11) Pound River and N. Fk.

Lee County
(12) N. Fk. Powell River
(13) Martins Creek

Scott County
(14) Stock Creek
(15) Straight Fork
(16) Big Stony Creek
(17) Bark Camp Lake
(18) Little Stony Creek

Russell County
(19) Big Cedar Creek
(20) Laurel Bed Lake

Washington County
(21) Big Brumley Creek
(22) Big Tumbling Creek
(23) Whitetop Laurel
(24) Straight Branch
(25) Beartree Lake
(26) Tennessee Laurel
(27) Valley Creek
(28) Green Cove Creek

Tazewell County
(29) Little Tumbling Creek
(30) Laurel Creek
(31) Roaring Fork
(32) Maiden Spring Creek
(33) Lake Witten
(34) Lincolnshire Lake
(35) Cove Creek

Smyth County
(36) Middle Fk. Holston River (Upper)
(37) Middle Fk. Holston River (Marion)
(38) Staley Creek
(39) Cressy Creek
(40) Dickey Creek
(41) Comers Creek
(42) Hurricane Creek
(43) S. Fk. Holston River
(44) Little Laurel Creek

Dial a Toll-free Number and Hunt the Late Canada Goose Season

by Dr. Gary Costanzo
VDGIF Wildlife Biologist

Although the migratory Canada goose season was closed this year in Virginia because of the continued decline in the migratory Canada goose population, the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries this year for the first time approved a special late Canada goose season. Hunters will be able to legally harvest resident Canada geese west of I-95 from January 15 through February 8, 1997. The late goose season, which is aimed at harvesting resident birds, is a combination of sound wildlife management practices and excellent recreational opportunities.

Migratory Canada geese which use the Atlantic flyway, breed and raise their young in northern Canada. In the fall they migrate south, and many overwinter in Virginia. Migratory geese leave Virginia in early March and return to their northern breeding grounds to raise their young. Resident Canada geese remain in Virginia year-round, breeding and raising their young here. Numbers of resident geese are rapidly increasing, and even though the geese can provide aesthetic benefits, they are becoming a nuisance in certain areas, damaging crops, golf courses, and lawns. They have even become a potential human health hazard at airports and public water supplies. Management strategies are needed to slow their growth, and the late Canada goose season is one of those strategies. The daily bag limit will be three geese, and the possession limit will be six.

Hunters can take advantage of this great opportunity by calling a toll-free number to participate. The numbers are slightly different for rotary and touchtone phones. Hunters using a touchtone phone should dial 1-800-WETLAND while those with rotary service should dial 1-888-44WETLAND. In both cases the caller will be asked to supply the six digit number from their hunting license, followed by the "#" key on their phone. Lifetime licenses have fewer than six digits, and hunters with those licenses will need to enter those digits, followed by the "#" key. Hunters exempted from having a license need to enter six zeros and the "#" sign.

Soc Clay

Besides giving their hunting license number when calling 1-800-WETLAND, hunters should also be prepared to provide their name, address, phone number, and date of birth. The caller will then be assigned a unique 10 digit registration number they will record on their license, in the space below the initials of the license agent. Hunters who are exempt from normal license requirements should keep the registration number in their possession while goose hunting during the late season. This number must be available for inspection by a game warden upon request in the field. The registration is free and there is no limit on the number of hunters that can register for the special late goose hunt.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which has jurisdiction over migratory waterfowl, allowed VDGIF to offer this special late season because the season will be carefully monitored. A follow-up survey will be conducted with registered hunters to ascertain the harvest and hunter success during the season. Hunters should keep a record of where and when they hunted and what they harvested to complete the survey.

The area west of I-95 is not traditionally known for its goose hunting, but its goose population is expanding quickly. VDGIF recommends that hunters who want to succeed do some pre-season scouting and secure necessary permission from landowners. Hunters should allow adequate advance time to learn the birds' patterns. From this effort hunters will learn that geese have favored different feeding and resting areas at different times of the day. The birds should respond well to decoys at this time of year, but setting up in an area where the birds want to go is an important key to success.

The late goose season was established to allow additional harvest of resident geese while allowing only a minimal harvest of migratory geese. Most of Virginia's resident geese winter west of I-95, and most, if not all, of the migrant geese winter east of I-95.

With the proper management strategies such as implementing a late goose season, we can use this resource wisely and find the balance between too few migratory and too many resident geese. ☐

Safety

by Col. William Antozzi, Boating Safety Officer

Cellular Telephones on Boats

Marine radio-telephones (VHF-FM) are a standard type used on recreational vessels. The Coast Guard does not advocate cellular phones as a substitute for them and for the regular maritime radio distress and safety systems recognized by the Federal Communications Commission and the International Radio Regulations. Cellular phones can have a place on board as an added measure of safety, but can not substitute for VHF Marine radio telephones.

Cellular phones generally cannot provide ship to ship safety communication with rescue vessels. If a distress call is made on a cellular phone, only the one party called will be able to hear the message. Most cellular phones are designed for a land-based service. Their coverage offshore is limited, and may change without notice. Locating a cellular caller is hard to do. If the caller does not know precisely where he is, the Coast Guard will have difficulty finding his location on the water.

In some areas, however, cellular providers have established a special code (*CG) which, if the distressed vessel is in range, will connect directly to a Coast Guard Operations Center. That service may only work with the carrier to which the boater has subscribed.

Cellular phones do provide the convenience of simple, easy-to use, inexpensive, private, and generally reliable telephone service to home, office, automobile, or other locations. Placing a shore-to-ship call to someone with a cellular telephone is especially convenient. However, cellular phones can not be used outside the United States, and a special agreement with the carrier may be needed to use it outside the carrier's local service area.

VHF marine radios were designed with safety in mind. If a boater is in distress, calls can be received not only by the Coast Guard but by ships which may be in position to give immediate assistance. A VHF marine radio also helps ensure that storm warnings and other urgent marine information broadcasts are received. The Coast Guard announces these broadcasts on VHF channel 16. Timely receipt of such information may save lives. Additionally, VHF marine radios can be used anywhere in the United States or around the world.

Conversations are not private on VHF radios and individual boats cannot be assigned a personal phone number. If a call is expected, channel 16 or the marine operator's working channel must be continually monitored.

Actually there is no reason for comparison between cellular phones and VHF marine radio because they normally provide different services. The cellular phone is best used for what it is, an onboard telephone—a link with shore based telephones. A VHF marine radio is intended for communication with other ships or marine installations—and a powerful ally in time of emergency.

If boaters have portable or hand held cellular telephones by all means they should be taken aboard. A cellular phone is no substitute for a VHF radio, but, if boaters are within cellular range, they may provide an additional means of communication. They may be used to call home, if boaters are delayed returning, and callers can also employ them to obtain the latest marine weather reports from the National Weather Service at 1-900-933-2628.

It should be remembered that the Coast Guard cannot use direction finding equipment to locate the source of cellular phone signals and cellular phone calls cannot be heard by other boaters. □

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Photo TipS

By Lynda Richardson

Your Fourth Magazine Assignment: The Results

Congratulations to all those who entered this year's "Your Fourth Magazine Assignment" contest. For some reason, we didn't have the response we've had in years past but the competition was still fierce. It was a tough decision but we did narrow it down to four winners.

As you may remember, this assignment was to travel anywhere in Virginia and record the "Power of Color" found naturally in the outdoors. (See "Photo Tips" May & June 1996) Entries were judged on the photographer's creativity in selecting, using, and positioning color to enhance the overall photograph.

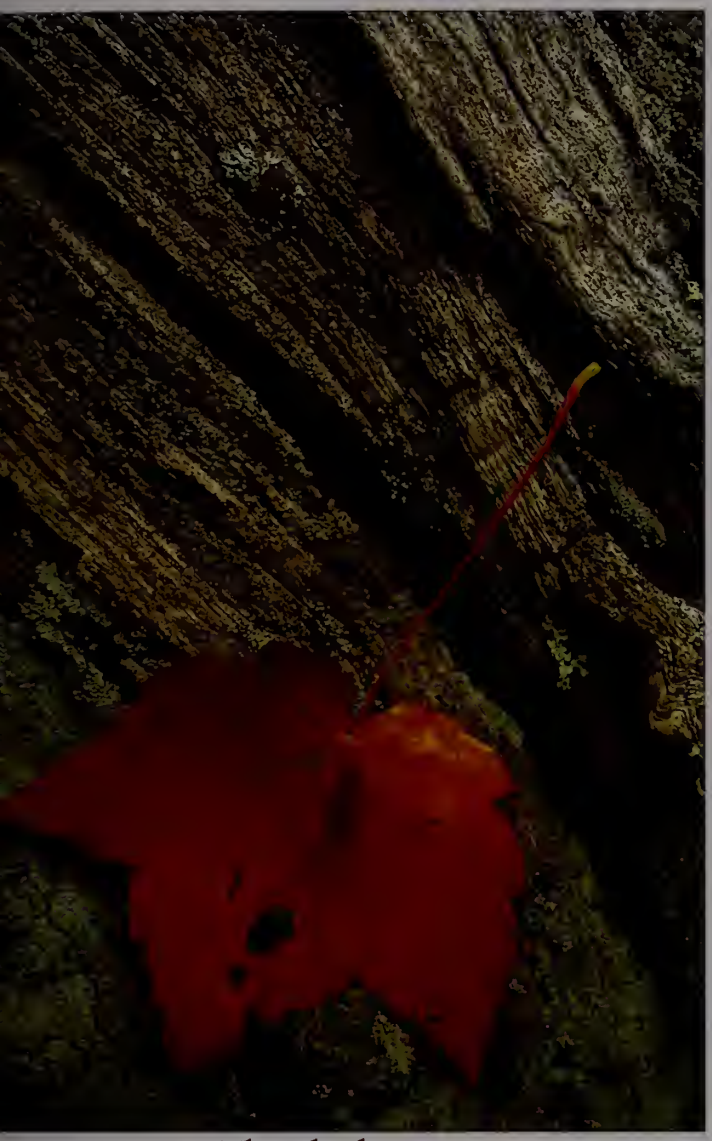
First Place goes to Peggy Childress of Mechanicsville, Virginia for her closeup of a sunflower. In Peg's delivery memo she states, "This [photograph] was taken on a very hot and steamy July morning in a field of sunflowers near Shirley Plantation." Photographed under muted light and properly exposed, color can really saturate slide film as seen in this vibrant image. The neon yellow sunflower really pops out from its green and yellow background. Diffused bits of yellow in the background (other sunflowers), created by limiting the depth of field, actually makes this potentially ordinary photograph into a wonderful, warm blend of yellows and greens. It doesn't bother me that the top petals of the flower are cut off as my focus starts at the center of the flower which remains intact. Beautiful photograph!

Peggy Childress

First Place

Peggy Childress

Second Place



Third Place

Honorable Mention

Second Place also goes to Peggy Childress for her image of red sumac. "Grayson-Highlands State Park was in beautiful color during the first week of October. It was hard to choose which slide to include," she writes of this winning image. Besides the striking red berries contrasting with a brilliant blue sky, I found that the shape of the clouds added an important element. By mimicking the curve of the sumac bush against the sky, the clouds emphasize its shape repeating the pattern and adding strength to the image. Peg's decision to include the mountain laurel below, a solid green, helps to set off the sumac even more, sandwiching red between blue and green, primary and secondary colors. Put your finger across the bottom of this image blocking out the laurel and see how it looks without the added green of the laurel. Which do you prefer...with or without? Good job Peggy!

Third Place goes to Bryan Parsons of Charlottesville, Virginia for his image of a maple leaf on an old stump. In his delivery memo, Bryan describes how he made this photograph. I "shot at the Picnic Area (Grayson Highlands State Park), midday, when the light was too intense for scenic work. I used an off-white umbrella as a diffuser. I probably used the 24-50mm lens with my aperture set at F22 for maximum depth of field." The diffused light created by Bryan's umbrella was a perfect choice for photographing this scene. The vibrant red maple leaf seems to glow against the neutral, grey background of the log. The smooth surface of the leaf against the textured lines of the wood also add to the contrast of leaf against background. I love the dark holes in the leaf and the dark wood crevasses which add an element of continuity to the image. Wonderful, Bryan!

Honorable Mention goes to Doreen Jenkins of Madison, Virginia for her image of red honeysuckle. Primary colored red flowers burst forth from the left and are balanced by muted red flowers in the background of the lower right of this photograph. Against a secondary colored blue-green background, these flowers seem to spring forth to grab the viewers attention. Excellent, Doreen!

You may notice that all the winning images were shot in diffused, muted light. As you can see, this is a perfect lighting choice for creating the rich, saturated images of nature and the "WOW" of color.

Thanks again to all of those who entered this years contest. If you didn't win this year don't despair because an exciting, new and improved contest is in the works. Check out the March issue of *Virginia Wildlife* for details but until then, happy shooting!

JANUARY AFIELD

by Jack Randolph

There are Januarys and there are Januarys. Last January was one of the coldest on record. It could hardly be considered a model for Januarys to come—or so we hope!

However, there are some things that happen in January that the weather can hardly touch. On January 1, you need a new fishing license and the changes to the fishing regulations enacted last fall become the law of the land. There are quite a few changes this year so sportsmen be alert.

Hunters tend to view January as belonging to waterfowl and small game hunting, yet fishermen find plenty to do if the weather remains sufficiently mild. However, if the weather's miserable, waterfowlers will not mind. The waterfowler likes his weather cold and nasty while his colleagues who enjoy other outdoor sports do not.

On the basis of national waterfowl populations last year was a great one for ducks. It was better than usual here in Virginia because, in addition to having lots of ducks on the flyway, the weather was sour enough to send lots of them scurrying south.

This year promises to be an even better year. The flyway is loaded with birds. All that is needed is the weather to get them here. Yet, the frigid weather needed for good duck hunting can be a two-edged sword. If the weather comes, complete with snow and ice, duck hunters and fishermen alike will have difficulty dealing with snow-covered access roads and ice-encrusted boat ramps. It is not an easy time of the year. One must be constantly aware of what lurks in those frigid waters in the form of hypothermia or an unseen ice flow that can poke a hole in a fast moving boat.

January is also prime time for hunting rabbits, quail, and grouse. Last year snow deprived quail hunters of several rare hunting days because when the snow covers the ground the quail season automatically closes. This same snow denied many hunters access to those far back places where the best coverts are often found.

If we have a mild January, anglers will have occasion to rejoice because mild weather at this time of the year is capable of producing fishing that is easily as good as one would find at other times of the year. During the month of January in 1995, the New River produced a 41-pound musky. At Western Branch Lake in Suffolk, anglers caught landlocked striped bass weighing 41 and 36 pounds. On a weekend early in the month last year anglers caught 20 stripers at Western Branch with the heaviest reaching 30 pounds. A 36-pound flathead catfish was taken from Claytor Lake and a 10 pound largemouth was caught from Lake Gaston. At Lake Chesdin anglers were busy catching bass and stripers that were busting into schools of shad.

Chickahominy Lake produces good fishing for bass, crappie, and pickerel during January, but this lake freezes easily. Lake Anna is generally a bit warmer than surrounding lakes and it offers good January action, particularly around Dikes 2 and 3 where live bait often fools a bass, a nice striper or even a walleye.

January is also an excellent month for catching big blue catfish from the James River, mainly around Dutch Gap. Cats exceeding 30 to 40 pounds are not all that unusual.

Trout season is now open year round and, weather permitting, January can offer good action. This is also a good month for fishing for those big brown and rainbow trout at Lake Moomaw. Last year browns weighing up to 7 pounds were landed there.

The extremely low water temperatures that occurred in the ocean around the mouth of the bay last January erased the whale watching season, but if the weather is not as cold and the water a little warmer the humpbacks and possibly some fin whales may return to entertain the thousands who participate in the whale watching program sponsored by the Virginia Museum of Marine Science.

Being on the saltwaters in January isn't entirely a spectator sport. Trollers dragging spoons with planers or deep running plugs can often catch big striped bass off the mouth of the bay and along the Eastern Shore as far north as Chincoteague. Big bluefish have been caught on the wrecks not far offshore as late as the last week of December. It is entirely possible some will tarry to greet the new year.

The true fish of winter in Virginia is the tautog. By January the best fishing has usually moved out to the inshore wrecks although some may be found around the Bridge Tunnel's rocky islands if water doesn't get too cold. Last year, on the last day of December, the final day of the Virginia Salt Water Fishing Tournament for 1995, an angler caught a tautog from an offshore wreck that weighed 20¾ pounds—heavy enough to defeat the 19 pound, 6 ounce 'tog that was leading the contest to win the honors for tautog in 1995.

January is also a good time to fish below the power plants. On the "Hot Ditch," the outflow from Virginia Power on the Elizabeth River, look for good fishing for red drum and speckled trout. In one day last January, using shrimp for bait, a fisherman landed 40 drum measuring from 16 to 34 inches. In freshwater, those fortunate anglers who have access to the "warm side" of Lake Anna often do well with bass.

January wouldn't be January without the fishing shows. Acting under the false assumption that Virginia's anglers have an acute case of cabin fever about this time, the shows come to towns all over the state. Of course, those of us who like a little chilly fishing haven't given cabin fever a thought, but we go to the shows anyhow. After all—they are about fishin' aren't they? ☐

Recipes

By Joan Cone

Baked Trout For Winter

Virginians are fortunate that they can trout fish all winter. Of course, you'll need some cooperation from Old Man Winter! If you catch your own or purchase farm raised trout, remember they do have a tendency to be slightly dry. The least dry are brookies followed by browns and then rainbows. Trout can be kept moist by wrapping them in foil for baking or grilling or using some type of liquid as in the following recipe.

Menu

Hot Crab Dip
Trout Baked In Wine
Easy Grapefruit Spinach Salad
Quick Corn Sticks
Apple-Cranberry-Date Pie

Hot Crab Dip

½ pound (8 ounces) regular crabmeat
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
½ cup sour cream
2 tablespoons salad dressing
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1¼ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
½ teaspoon dry mustard
Pinch garlic salt
1 tablespoon milk
¼ cup cheddar cheese, grated

Remove cartilage from crabmeat. In large bowl, mix cream cheese, sour cream, salad dressing, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, and garlic salt until smooth. Add enough milk to make mixture creamy. Stir in 2 tablespoons of the grated cheese. Fold crabmeat into cream cheese mixture. Pour into greased 1 quart casserole. Top with remaining cheese. Bake at 325° until mixture is bubbly and browned on top, about 30 minutes. Serve with crackers. Makes about 4 cups dip.

Trout Baked in Wine

6 whole drawn stream trout (8 ounces each)
2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
Salt and pepper
2 tablespoons snipped fresh chives
2 tablespoons snipped fresh parsley
1 cup dry white table wine

Heat oven to 400°. Spray a 13 x 9-inch baking dish with nonstick vegetable cooking spray. Set aside. Brush cavity of each trout evenly with juice and sprinkle cavities evenly with salt and pepper. Arrange fish in single layer in prepared dish. Sprinkle with chives and parsley. Pour wine evenly over fish and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until fish flakes easily when fork is inserted in thickest part of fish. Baste once or twice during cooking. Garnish with fresh parsley sprigs and lemon slices. Makes 6 servings.

Easy Grapefruit and Spinach Salad

1 grapefruit
½ cup fat free ranch dressing
1 tablespoon honey
1 package (10 ounces) fresh spinach, stems trimmed, rinsed, drained
1 green apple, unpeeled, cored, thinly sliced
⅓ cup sliced red onion, separated into rings
Ground pepper to taste

Peel grapefruit and section over bowl, reserving juice (about 2 tablespoons). Combine juice, salad dressing and honey. In large bowl, combine grapefruit sections with remaining ingredients. Toss well with dressing mixture. Makes five 1½-cup servings.

Quick Corn Sticks

1¼ cups cornmeal
¾ cup flour
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon baking powder
¾ teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon sugar
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup milk
¼ cup vegetable oil

Combine first 5 ingredients, mixing well. Combine remaining ingredients and add to dry ingredients, stirring just until moistened. Place a well-greased, cast-iron corn stick pan in a preheated 425° oven for 3 minutes or until hot. Remove pan from oven and spoon batter into pan, filling two-thirds full. Bake at 425° for 12 minutes or until lightly browned. Makes 1½ dozen.

Quick Corn Muffins: Season muffin pans as for corn sticks. Spoon batter into pans, filling two-thirds full. Bake as for corn sticks. Makes 15 muffins.

Apple-Cranberry-Date Pie

Unbaked pie crust for a deep-dish, 9-inch, two-crust pie
1 cup sugar
½ teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons flour
1 cup fresh cranberries, washed and picked over
¾ cup finely chopped dates
Grated rind of 1 lemon
5 large tart apples (preferably Granny Smith or Jonathan)
2 tablespoons butter or margarine

Line the bottom of a deep dish, 9-inch pie pan with half the unbaked pie crust. Set aside. In a large bowl, stir together the sugar, salt and flour. Add the cranberries, dates and lemon rind and stir. Peel, core and slice the apples and stir them gently into the sugar mixture. Pile the filling into the lined pie pan and dot with butter. Cover with the top pie crust. Crimp the edges together and cut several small vents in the top. Bake in a preheated 425° oven for 10 minutes. Lower the heat to 350° degrees and continue baking for 30 to 40 minutes or until the apples are tender and the crust is browned. Serve hot, warm, or at room temperature. Makes 6 servings.

Enjoy Joan Cone's award winning game cooking course on the Internet with the following code:
http://www.wmb.com/mindstore/cook

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